



DESCRIPTION AND PLAN  
OF THE CITY OF HAVANA

(1603)

CRISTOBAL RODA

1. The church.
2. The Dominican convent.
3. The Franciscan convent.
4. The old hospital.
5. The new hospital.
6. Fuerza.
7. Platform.
8. The old enclosure about the city.
9. The walls as then planned.
10. The Plaza de Armas.
11. The new plaza.
12. Open country.
13. The harbor.
14. Swamp.
15. Moat.
16. Terraplen.
17. City gates.
18. Customs house.
19. Jail.
20. Meat-market.
21. Governor's house.
22. Squares of houses.
23. Harbor entrance.
24. Maestranza.

Note : The large water-colored original of this map which the author found in 54-1-16 has been removed from that package and along with other heretofore unknown Cuban maps and plans which were discovered in the course of the investigation this book represents, it is now displayed in a special Cuban case in the exhibition hall of the Archives of the Indies at Seville.

H.W.I.  
W6432

# THE EARLY HISTORY OF CUBA

1492-1586

WRITTEN FROM ORIGINAL SOURCES

Irene A. John Wright  
BY

New York  
THE MACMILLAN COMPANY

1916

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THIS BOOK IS DEDICATED

TO

ROLAND RAY CONKLIN

His interest in Cuba's history made possible the first thorough investigation into the sources of that history which are the Cuban documents in the General Archive of the Indies at Seville, Spain.

THE AUTHOR

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## INTRODUCTION

This book is the history of Cuba from its discovery by Columbus in 1492, through the year 1586, when Sir Francis Drake, in sailing along the north shore of the island after his successful raid on other Spanish settlements of the West Indies, closed the first era of the colony's history. In that raid "the great corsair" demonstrated that Britannia ruled the waves of the Spanish main and that to hold possession of its shores and islets the Catholic King must enable his colonies there to defend themselves since his humbled navy was no longer equal to the task. Immediately Philip acted and there arose great forts, in Havana as elsewhere, which are enduring monuments to *Draque*, hated by Spaniards to this day! In the safe shadow of these forts, industry and agriculture began to develop and, thanks especially to sugar and to copper, Cuba ceased to be a mere wayport of empire between the peninsula of Spain and the American continents: she came to be prized not only because of her geographical position (of great strategic importance) but also upon her own account for her own inherent worth.

Although the writing of the consecutive history of a country is not usually so undertaken, I have compiled this book from the documents now (1915) available to investigators in the Archive of the Indies at Seville, Spain, with regard, however, to the few published works which are of value in a study of this portion of

Cuba's development. Unquestionably many documents relating to the island in the years cited exist in other archives than Seville's; I have not attempted to see them for the simple reason that the quantity of those at Seville is overwhelming. The character and the continuity of the documents I have seen persuades me that the account of Cuba's progress which I have been able to construct from them is too substantial to be entirely upset by any others elsewhere.

To those not familiar with the General Archive of the Indies at Seville, I would say that it is the Spanish government's collection, freely open to students, of nearly all the papers which accumulated through centuries in offices in Spain and in America from which that government administered its overseas possessions from the era of discovery until revolution wrote finis to the record of colony after colony. Cuba, because she remained long under Spanish domination, is fully,—I was about to say the most fully,—represented among these documents; and perhaps it is for the very same reason that her papers have been less studied, not to say not studied at all.

They lie practically untouched,—well preserved manuscripts done into uncounted big packages of the letters and reports of the island's governors, of her royal officials, of her bishops and lesser clergy, of her municipal and ecclesiastical councils, of her distinguished and of even her humble citizens; uncounted tomes wherein were copied as they were issued all the royal communications which were the colony's law; accounts of many varieties; civil and criminal law suits of all sorts, and too many ponderous hide-bound volumes of *residencias*. Some of these documents

Muñoz copied for his *Colección* which exists only in MSS. at Madrid and makes them therefore no more generally accessible than they were before. Some have been printed, scattered through the inaccurate indexless first series of *Documentos Inéditos* and filling three volumes of the much better presented second series of those unedited documents. Some, too, have been published elsewhere either whole, as appendices, or in part, as footnotes: these are particularly misleading, presented as they are without their setting of the documents which occasioned, accompanied, modified or cancelled them. Even the two series of *Documentos Inéditos* are only irritating in direct proportion to a student's realization that they are a selection and one not particularly well chosen nor with knowledge of all there was from which to choose. In fact, not one document concerning Cuba in one thousand that exist at Seville has been made public in any way, shape, or manner. I believe therefore I am justified in saying that the sources for Cuban history have been heretofore unknown.

This is, of course, to declare that the history of the island has not been written until this present book. Bold as this statement may seem to be I believe that it, too, is justified by the facts. History cannot be written without access to its documentary sources; Cuba's are at Seville, and at Seville no person has sought these sources since they became accessible except myself and Mr. Francis S. Philbrick of the University of California,—foreigners, both of us, to the island which interests us. Even Pezuela, *insigne español*, wrote of Cuba before the sources were so accessible, and he realized as much and confessed it.

This being the situation I have ignored secondary sources,—even Pezuela's work, to which nevertheless I desire to pay tribute of my appreciation of the labor it represents. I have ignored secondary sources because I know that there has passed through my hands a greater wealth of material for the writing of the history of Cuba than any other person has handled. My reliance is on that material. For every statement of fact in this work, for which no other authority is given, I consider myself obligated to meet demands that I cite, not merely case, shelf and package at Seville (as I have done in the foreword to each book of this volume in terms unhappily unintelligible outside the Archive), but definitely the very paper within those bundles which I have considered evidence sufficient to warrant the statement concerned.

An examination into these papers may at any point prove me to have misread, to have misconstrued, or to have omitted; it is not easy, as circumstances now are, for any person who may become my critic to make that examination,—not every reader may go to Seville to see for himself how nicely I have handled this material, nor outside of Seville can any one collect documentary evidence he can be certain outweighs what I may have seen there, and in historical controversies documents must answer documents. Nothing else suffices. Because I do not rejoice in this immense advantage in my favor I have urged that Cubans bestir themselves to have published the material for the writing of their history which exists nowhere save at Seville. I have urged it, despite the detail that I recognize it to be a Herculean task to publish that unmeasured, but not unmeasurable, quantity of docu-

ments! I hope to see the Cuban government or some scholarly association worthy of Cuba undertake the task,—the patriotic task of making those sources public by printing them “to the foot of the letter,” *unedited*, i. e., uninfluenced by any man’s opinion. When the sources are so made accessible,—*verbatim et literatim*,—the island’s fair record and fair fame will have been protected. Then, also, intelligent discussion of that record will become for the first time possible and much eulogy as well as much denunciation will be silenced by a reasonable acquaintance with the truth.

THE AUTHOR.

LA LONJA, SEVILLA, ANDALUSIA

*May 4, 1914–Sept. 9, 1915.*

THE EARLY HISTORY OF CUBA

## FOREWORD TO BOOK I

Although it was the intention to write this book from original sources available in the Archive of the Indies at Seville, i. e., from manuscript documents there preserved of the times, the places, the persons concerned, certain existing books could by no means be ignored in the commencement of the work: because their authors lived and wrote of Cuba in the very years with which I have had to deal. Of chief value among these is Fray Bartolome de las Casas' *History of the Indies*. I do not care to undertake to defend the good *clerigo's* estimates of numbers, but this I must say: his relation of the facts of the occupation of Cuba is not at variance with the documents I have seen, nor do these documents give me any reason to suppose that his impassioned accounts of the cruelty of their Spanish masters toward the aborigines are exaggerated. Except where numbers,—his estimates of populations and of the killed,—are concerned I believe that documents could be cited toward proving true with respect to Cubeños every allegation of mistreatment and misery las Casas makes in the history cited. I have also made use of Oviedo's good work; of Gomara; of Solis; of Bernal Diaz del Castillo; even of Herrera, and of still others who, however, I do not at the moment of this writing recall as having contributed any considerable amount of information. The two published series of *Documentos Ineditos* have been used; especially the second is of real value up to 1555.

Since the bulk of the material I have used is, as stated in the introduction, not accessible as yet except to investigators in the Archive of the Indies, I find myself obliged to address to them the following remarks concerning that used in Book I. of this history; I am reduced to employing terms they will understand, even at the risk of seeming to others to be as unintelligible as a cipher letter from an admiral of his armada to the Catholic King!

I found my first reference to Cuba in 139-1-1, T. I., f. 24, and from there worked forward on the lead through that series, finding evidence that I was delving in the right direction in 139-1-4, T. II., f. 18 r. I saw all, I think, which there was to see in 139-1-4; 139-1-5; 139-1-6 and 139-1-7. This series of *cedulares* was my main vein at the commencement of the work. I found supplementary material for this first period in 1-1-1/15; 1-1-1/18; 1-1-1/20; 1-1-1/26; 1-2-1/17; 1-2-2/18; 1-2-7/27; 1-2-8/28; 1-3-17/8; 1-3-20/11; 1-3-30/21; 2-1-1/20; 2-1-1/25; 2-1-2/26; 2-1-3/22; 2-2-1/1; 2-2-1/14; 2-5-1/9; 2-5-1/14; 47-1-3/30; 51-5-1/11; 53-1-9; 51-5-1/11; 143-3-11; and in 54-2-2, in which series I knew that I touched the lode. As these numbers will intimate to those who understand the arrangement of the Archive of the Indies, I did not confine my examination to packages, the labels of which suggested that I might find them valuable; I was content to see nothing less than everything there was in the place dated after 1508 and not branded as originating on the continent south of Mexico. I found enough documents referring to Cuba in packages where they might not be supposed to rest, to compensate me for going through stacks of other

such packages which were just what they purported to be and therefore of no worth to me. I did not at any time narrow this generous survey of my field for work. Who knows the Archive of the Indies will appreciate what an amount of drudgery I undertook; no others can. Who knows the Archive will also appreciate my reluctance to boast that I have seen every paper in it referring to Cuba between 1508 and 1600; I have the temerity, nevertheless, to say that I would be pleased to have any investigator there exhibit one between those dates from which my weary eyes have not acquired its corresponding portion of their ache!

I. A. W.



# THE EARLY HISTORY OF CUBA

## BOOK I

### CHAPTER I

DISCOVERY (1492)

"Taino! Taino!"<sup>1</sup>

Christopher Columbus' diary shows that while exploring among the Bahamas, immediately after in discovering them he had found a New World "for Castile and for Leon," the Admiral had news from the natives of those keys of another island he seems at first to have thought they called Colba. He presently understood the word aright, to be Cuba. He heard at the same time of Bosio or Bohio, which he thought a separate island, whereas it may have been the eastern end of Cuba as distinguished from the rest and identified with Hayti especially in the more bellicose character of its inhabitants.

Columbus believed that Cuba was Cipango, that half or wholly mythical land of gold and pearls, precious stones and spiceries, which Marco Polo in describing it located some fifteen hundred miles off the continent of India. Therefore he readily interpreted the natives of the Bahaman keys to say that in Cuba

<sup>1</sup> Aboriginal word for "Peace!" or "We are friends!" A native salutation to Columbus.

there were numerous great merchants and navigators, and a commerce commensurate with the magnificence of populous cities of a large and wealthy oriental state. He bent his course southwestward and on October 28, 1492, having lain off shore all night in a rain, he landed on Cuba which he christened Juana for the prince, Don Juan, son of Isabella of Castile, Columbus' patron, and of her husband, Ferdinand of Aragon.

I do not believe that Columbus' landfall can be determined. The honor of his first debarkation has been claimed for every considerable port from Baracoa to Nuevitas; it can be proven for none, since the sole source of information on this point, Columbus' diary as preserved in extract only by Fray Bartolome de las Casas, reflects the confusion which existed in the discoverer's mind as he sailed along the unknown coast of an island which is on the other side of the world from where he supposed it to be, seeking to find in the palm-thatched huts of simple savages signs of the fabulous capital city of Cathay!

He believed this city to be ten days' sailing westward still from the point at which he had landed on Cuba, and in hopes to reach it he continued in that direction, coasting the north shore. On November 2nd from a good port he called Rio de Mares he sent Rodrigo de Jerez and Luis de Torres, "who had been a Jew and was said to know Hebrew and Chaldean and some Arabic," inland accompanied by two natives he had taken from the Bahamas; they were to establish communication between him and the Grand Kahn. He careened his ships while he waited for them to return. On the 6th they came, and reported encountering nothing more imposing than a native village of fifty

huts "and a thousand inhabitants," of whom they got no news of any Oriental potentate. The most significant sight these earliest explorers of Cuba saw was natives smoking tobacco.

On November 12th Columbus turned back, retracing his course along that northern shore, attracted now to the southeast by what he understood the natives he had with him to tell of "the island of Babeque . . . where the people gather gold with lights on the beach at night." Although buffeted by contrary winds and opposing currents he succeeded in making cursory exploration of much of the north coast of Cuba. He departed from the eastern extremity of the island on December 5th, 1492, for Hayti which lay in sight upon his horizon.

Columbus named Hayti *La Española*, i. e., the Spanish island. At a point on the north shore which he called La Navidad he left a party of less than forty men, in a fort built of the timbers of one of his ships which was wrecked on Christmas Day. He then sailed home to Spain (1493), with news of his discoveries but without the remotest conception of their real nature or therefore of their magnitude.

Cuba, as Columbus saw this island, appealed to him as lovely in the extreme; he depleted his vocabulary of Spanish adjectives in persistent attempt to describe its green and fragrant woodlands, where, among trees of strange varieties displaying leaves, flowers and fruits of kinds he had not seen before, he recognized palms and pines; its rivers, pouring to the ocean, cool between banks fringed thick with vegetation; its mountains towering snowless and eternally green with unfailing verdure, and the little hills and the plains between

where though it was November the grass grew tall as it does in Andalusia in April and in May. The air was sweet with unidentified perfume and the singing of birds in the thickets; it was temperate, even pleasantly chill. He could not sufficiently extol what he saw; he thought a thousand tongues could not adequately relate its loveliness. Human eyes, he wrote, could never tire of seeing such beauty, nor human ears of hearing the music of those wild birds in the woods. He urged the queen and the king to whom he addressed his diary to believe his testimony; he regretted that there were not with him many persons known to be conservative, to see what he saw, since they he felt assured would not praise it less. It pleased God, he exclaimed, to lead him on, from marvel to greater marvel, and now past a land not surpassed under the sun in climate, soil and abundance of potable waters, sure to prove materially profitable to Christendom, and to Spain especially, through interchange of traffic, and certain to redound to the increase and the glory of the Catholic religion through the conversion to the faith of the multitudes of its population.

On November 18th, upon an eminence, Columbus erected a great cross of very suitable timbers which he had found, ready, apparently, for that symbolic purpose.

Of gold, however, to be bartered for like common merchandise, Columbus saw none in the possession of the natives of Cuba, who proffered him instead as their most valuable belonging "cotton" gathered from the *ceiba* trees, which he thought they did not cultivate to obtain the crop; they wove this "cotton" into cloth. He reported to the monarchs that doubtless Spanish

merchants could build up profitable trade in this tree "cotton" with the great cities he was yet to find in the kingdom of the Grand Kahn and in those of his neighbor lords of the Orient. Once Columbus thought he saw a native wearing a silver nose-ring and he thought, too, that he saw rock which promised silver mines. He sent down divers for pearls but found the oysters barren. Along the beaches where streams poured down from certain mountains he remarked stones the color of iron, in a vicinity (Moa) where within only the last few years tremendous deposits of iron ore have been definitely charted for industrial exploitation. There, too, and elsewhere he saw pine trees of girth and height to serve as masts for mighty ships, and he noted a suitable site for a waterpower sawmill. He tapped for rosin and considered the possibility of revenue from this source to be worth investigating. In ports he visited he picked up stones which gleamed yellow and he brought them to Spain for assay, but always when he insisted upon gold the natives waved him on, southward still toward Babeque. It is possible that Babeque was Hayti: considerable free gold was found there and it was the value of its mines which made La Española the earliest center of Spanish settlement.

American geologists state that in former ages what is now Cuba was two islands separated by a shallow sea. Its bottom, rising, has united them. One island has become the mountainous western end of Cuba and the other the even more mountainous eastern end; what was the sea bed is now the comparatively uneventful plain of the central provinces of the republic. The two extremities of the island differ in geological formation; they differ in indigenous flora, in cultivated crops,

and vastly in appearance as seen by the most unscientific eye. It seems quite probable that in 1492 they were inhabited by differing peoples.

Concerning the tribes which lived in the west end of Cuba very little indeed is known. Those of the east seem to have feared them. They were reported to "have no houses nor towns nor cultivated crops,—they live by hunting and fishing."

The aborigines of the eastern end of Cuba were further advanced in culture. They were a sedentary agricultural people, probably true Tainans, as Dr. Fewkes writing for the Smithsonian has designated the original Antillan race as distinguished from the Carib and unmodified by it.

Cuba cannot, however, have remained uninvaded by that more bellicose race, the Caribs, at home on the South American mainland and on accessible islands of which they had taken possession. It is possible that Caribs who arrived as raiders remained as residents of Cuba. Nevertheless, Tainan characteristics seem to have prevailed in the people the Spaniards found here.

The Cubeños as the aborigines of Cuba have been called to distinguish them from Cubans, their successors on the soil, were evidently a good-looking race. More than once their Spanish conquerors commented upon the handsome physical development of the men; among the women they found beauty. Their reddish color was not unattractive.

Modesty seems to have been as lacking among them as it is among the lower animals; they were no more depraved. Assertion that they were unnaturally vicious is unwittingly contradicted time and again by the Spaniards themselves who seem so to have accused

them in order to justify their own cruelty. The men and maidens wore no clothing despite the fact that they knew how to weave their tree "cotton" into cloth. The matrons wore breech-clouts. All were fond of necklaces and girdles which they made of bone and of pebbles; what little gold (and possibly some silver) they used in similar adornment was not more prized than bright stones.

They lived in houses they called *buhios* or *bohios*, a name which along with the type of building persists to this day. Aboriginal *bohios* were circular in shape (when they were called *caneyes*) or rectangular. They were constructed of "canes," presumably bamboo, and thatched with palm leaves or other suitable material. Some had windows and porch. There is reason to believe that the aborigines of Cuba built better houses of this description than does the *guajiro* (country Cuban) of the present day. The Cubeño's house was possibly the more artistically furnished of the two. He had for bed a finely woven hammock; the article and its name are of American origin. He had baskets and decorated pottery, stone and carven pestles. In some houses there were handsomely carved wooden seats. Spanish explorers bore admiring witness to the detail that this aboriginal home was clean and tidy. No present-day traveller through rural Cuba can speak as enthusiastically for the *guajiro*'s habitation. These houses were isolated, preferably on hilltops, or gathered into towns, when they were arranged around a central square.

Each such town seems to have had a clan chieftain or patriarchal head whose house was larger than the rest and contained the idols belonging to the families

resident there. It is possible that over such chieftains there were others. The Spaniards mentioned "kings." Certainly they considered aboriginal Cuba to be divided into "provinces," and spoke of the native chiefs, *caciques*, of those provinces, but from their confused accounts in which every leader was a *cacique* it is impossible to learn anything satisfactory of the real political organization of primitive Cuba.

Polygamy was practiced. Of the marriage ceremony little is known. Fathers disposed of their daughters and grooms purchased their brides with dower gifts. *Caciques* had many wives. The aboriginal Cubeña seems to have been almost her man's equal in their simple daily life. The Cubeño deeply resented Spanish lust which seized upon her and degraded her. Spanish chronicles do not relate that she was the work animal which North American Indians, for instance, make of their squaws. There were in Hayti women who exerted great influence in native affairs; some were chieftainesses in their own right.

The Cubeños believed in supernatural beings: they had theories of their nature and power, implying possession of a mythology, and they employed a well-developed system of rites, ceremonies and procedures to influence these beings whom they symbolized by idols made of wood, stone, cloth, etc. They had a priesthood; they believed its members to be skilled in divination. Elsewhere such priests are known to have had elaborate mechanical contrivances to deceive their followers. They also treated the sick on whom they exerted the magic powers of their tutelary gods. In the Cubeño's ceremonies tobacco as a narcotic played a most interesting part.

The aborigine was an inveterate dancer. It seems to have been his very greatest delight to caper to the sound of his own voice, singing. There were religious dances, war dances and other dances which appear to have been purely recreative. His only other amusement was a ball game and, possibly, swimming. He was a tireless swimmer.

The Cubeño made canoes (another word and article of American origin), hollowing them out of the boles of great trees. Some canoes were handsomely ornamented. In these he travelled the coasts of the island and may possibly have made trading voyages to the surrounding continents.

The aborigine was an expert fisherman. He caught fish in nets or speared them. He had artificial fish-ponds and traps. He used the sucker-fish, attaching a cord to it; when it had fastened itself to its prey, a turtle, say, he drew both in.

The Cubeño cultivated the soil; he is even said to have practiced irrigation, but certainly not effectively for drouths brought him fatal famine. He grew food crops which were unquestionably the same on which rural Cuba subsists yet, i. e., *yuca*, from which the aborigine made *cazabi* bread (still eaten in the country); yams, ground nuts (peanuts); a certain type of squash, maize, beans, peppers and indigenous fruits from among which it is curious to note was lacking the one which seems commonest in the woodlands now, that is, the mango. It is an importation and so, surely, is the "native" lime and the wild orange despite evidence to the contrary which their presence now in the jungles of eastern Cuba would seem to constitute.

The aborigine was a hunter, but he killed for food, not

for pleasure. His biggest game was the woodrat (the *hutia*) of which he made a domestic pet as he did of the *yaguasa* duck. These two creatures bear his successor, the *guajiro*, pleasant company to this day. The Cubeño had also, however, another pet, a "mute dog," which is now extinct; some students believe it to have been no canine at all but a member of the bear family.

Among the animals, the Cubeño had nothing with which to contend. His amiable "dog" was the biggest quadruped the aborigine knew. Even the *maja* snake, a big constrictor, is ferocious in appearance only, and he caught and ate it, as country Cubans do yet though they are becoming sensitive to confess it. Nature provided the aborigine with nothing to contest against to develop aggressive spirit. His one animate enemy was not recognized as more than an annoyance: the ant.

The Cubeños were, therefore, not a warlike people; but no student of early chronicles gathers the impression that they were cowards. For possession of their country and for the sanctity of their homes as they conceived it,—as soon as the far from celestial character and the intention of the Spaniards had been brought home to their comprehension,—these natives donned their red warpaint, their feather head-dresses and the frontal amulets which were their scapularies, nor hesitated to cross their wooden javelins with the same tempered Toledo steel which, brandished in Italy and in Flanders, won for the Spaniard of the period of Cuba's conquest and settlement, a martial reputation as the finest fighting man in Christendom.

The Cubeños' spirit of hospitality, and their credulity, had, however, betrayed them. Excepting in those sections where they were enlightened by Haytian

refugees (with previous experience in La Española of the Christian character and purpose) the Cubeños received the first Spaniards who arrived among them as heavenly visitors, entreating them to remain in the villages they visited. Later, undeceived, the aborigines sought to resist the slavery to which the white man's supremacy especially in accoutrement readily reduced them. Failing to withstand it, they preferred death, and those who did not succumb to hard and continuous labor and lack of food,—conditions to which they were unaccustomed,—killed themselves by poison and by hanging, to escape the servitude which the Christians imposed. The women, rather than be slaves and become mothers of half-breed slaves, committed abortion and suicide. I am not relying for authority to make such statements as these upon the impassioned preachings of the good *clerigo*, Fray Bartolome de las Casas, but rather upon documents in the Sevillian archives, in the inditing of which that priest can have had no hand. They turn the blood cold. A people disappeared, not vanquished without the loss of a man in the single march of an expedition from Baracoa to Havana, as is usually supposed, but resisting to the end of a generation that knew what freedom meant.

This melting away of the native population was, as Bourne (*Spain in America*) has said, "the first appearance in modern times of a phenomenon of familiar occurrence in the later history of the contact of nature peoples with a ruling race." The eloquence of las Casas has made it the most familiar instance of the fatal consequences of such contact, and has bestowed on Spaniards a reputation for cruelty which I, for one, would not deny that they deserve merely be-

cause their cruelty was largely a passive disregard for human suffering, or because its disastrous effects were supplemented by those of imported diseases (small-pox and measles) to which the Cubeños had not the white man's degree of acquired immunity.

## CHAPTER II

### EXPLORATION AND OCCUPATION (1494-1513)

“Santiago! Santiago!”<sup>1</sup>

Columbus had no difficulty in recruiting for his second voyage to the New World which he proposed to undertake as soon as possible (1493). Before he approached Isabella and Ferdinand on the same matter, Columbus had appealed to the king of Portugal for means to cross “the Unknown Sea” west of Europe. The king of Portugal tricked him and finally declined to assist him, considering him a mad visionary, but now when this king heard that the madman had indeed found land by sailing west with an expedition fitted out by Spain, he was consumed with jealousy, alleged that what had been found lay within his jurisdiction, and began to fit out an expedition of his own to go take possession of it. This hastened the departure of the second Spanish fleet. When Columbus arrived at his destination, which was La Navidad on the north coast of Hayti, where he had left the first European settlers (if they may be called such) in all this western hemisphere, he found all had died, some within a very few days preceding his arrival. That place seemed to him unpropitious for the establishment of a town, so he coasted back a little eastward and chose instead the site of the first permanent European settlement in the

<sup>1</sup> “Saint James!” This was the Spanish battle cry.

New World at La Isabella, so named in honor of his especial patroness, the Queen of Castile. He left the town in the labors of building and himself departed westward in late April, 1494, with three caravels to continue, as the event proved, his exploration of Cuba, which he believed, however, to be a great headland of the continent of Asia. He was moved in this by desire to discover as many more islands and as much more "mainland" as possible to forestall the jealous king of Portugal in possession and therefore in ultimate ownership.

He approached Cuba in about the same locality from which he had left it in December of 1492, and from there he again coasted westward but this time he sailed along the southern shore of the island. He admired the marvellous ports he saw; among them was one he called Puerto Grande which was possibly Guantanamo, but I have seen nothing which suggests to me that Columbus entered the port which is now Santiago de Cuba. He admired the very high mountains which here do loom mightily from the water's edge, beautifully colored in russets and in greens; over their high tops the clouds roll, of afternoons, like ocean combers. Everywhere the natives swarmed to welcome him, bringing him simple gifts in exchange for which they demanded nothing, but accepted when offered the trinkets with which the Spaniards came provided; these they prized as articles of divine origin.

Columbus had with him natives he had taken from their homes in the Bahamas on his first voyage; presumably they had learned enough Spanish in two years to deserve now the name of interpreters. Because they advised it he left the coast of Cuba on May 13th and

during the digression discovered Jamaica, of which he explored the north shore, returning to Cuba in the vicinity of Cape Cruz which he so named, on May 18th (1494).

Now, as he continued along that coast, westward, he encountered heavy and constant rains: he was deluged every afternoon and evening and it annoyed him because of the type of vessel in which he sailed. In his way lay numberless islands, some of which were mere shoals under water, some were of bare sand, and some were cloaked with vegetation; they projected higher above water, and became greener and lovelier, the nearer they lay to the mainland of Cuba. They were of all sizes and were separated from one another by channels which the ships threaded among dangerous shallows; the vessels grounded time and again despite the utmost precautions the Admiral could take. Because he could not possibly provide a name for each islet Columbus called the collection the Gardens of the Queen, as it is known to this day. Onward still he sailed, through tropical storms, among numberless keys; he touched the mainland of Cuba at his convenience and the natives welcomed him with food and with calabashes full of fresh water. He captured a native to serve him as guide and this man assured him that Cuba was an island. Nevertheless, on June 12th (1494), aboard the caravel Niña, Columbus had a notary draw up a document containing the solemn declaration of persons aboard each of his three vessels, among them being masters of navigation and famous pilots,—“the most famous he had known how to select from the great armada he had brought from Spain,”—that Cuba was a continent.

Because sailing was dangerous,—long watches and

worry had broken his own health,—and because supplies were becoming scarce, the Admiral decided to turn back to La Española. He had reached a point from which onward the coast of Cuba bent south: presumably he was north and a little west of the Isle of Pines, truly in a dangerous shallow sea to this day not properly charted. He had already sighted that Isle and named it The Evangelist. He landed on it on June 12th (1494), presumably on its northwest shore. Indications are that he sailed into Siguanea Bay while seeking a channel eastward; failing to find this he sailed out again on June 13th, landing where he had landed before and there taking on what water and provisions he could get. On June 25th he left the Isle, sailing away over water spotted green and white, and white only so that it looked curdled, and again inky,—variations which alarmed his mariners, exhausted and hungry as they were, even as to-day they delight the tourist a-sailing those summer seas.

With every feeling of relief the expedition approached the east end of Cuba, sniffing with delighted recognition the fragrance it exhaled. On July 7th the Admiral went ashore to hear mass. He regained Cape Cruz on the 18th, where the natives brought the Spaniards of their bread, fish and fruits, so that they were pleased to rest there, recuperating through some days. On Tuesday, July 22nd, Columbus cleared from Cuba for La Española where eventually he arrived.

The Admiral saw Cuba but once again, in June, probably, of 1503, when, limping home from his fourth, a most disastrous voyage, he approached this island in the vicinity of Trinidad, coasted eastward to Cape Cruz and from there crossed to Jamaica.

In recognition of his very great services as discoverer Columbus (as he had stipulated before he undertook his voyages) was made representative of Spanish authority in the New World; he was not, however, successful in exercising it and was succeeded by Francisco de Bobadilla who in his turn was succeeded by Fray Nicolas de Ovando in 1501. Meanwhile the current of exploration and of interest had taken a southwesterly course, setting strongly toward the Isthmus of Darien. To accommodate traffic and because the location was in itself preferable, the city of Santo Domingo was founded on the south coast of La Española (Hayti), and it immediately superseded La Isabella in importance.

More than one ship sailing between Santo Domingo and struggling settlements on the north coast of South America and close by the isthmus, was blown out of its course and wrecked on Cuba. Survivors of these disasters made their way along the south coast of the island and on arrival in Santo Domingo in recounting their hardships they seem to have given out the impression that Cuba was all swamp! It is possible, too, that parties pursuing runaway Haytians into Cuba had brought back varying accounts of what lay across the narrow waters which divide these two islands.

Whether Cuba was an island or whether it was part of a continent, seems for a decade after Columbus' second visit not to have been generally known, although la Cosa's map dated 1500 (?) and Cantino's as well show it to be an island, and Peter Martyr said in these years that "there are not lacking those who dare declare they have circumnavigated it." By 1508 the Commendador Ovando entertained a desire to deter-

mine whether these persons or Columbus' pilots were right. The king forbade him to spend money in such investigation. Yet las Casas in his history states that Sebastian de Ocampo, commissioned by Ovando to do so, did circumnavigate Cuba and that on his return to Santo Domingo in the fall of 1508 he reported it to be an island peopled by natives who were kindly disposed toward the Spaniards. Personally, I have seen no documents relating to this voyage of Ocampo's; I incline to believe nevertheless that it was made.

It is a perhaps not unrelated fact that by 1509 the king of Spain had become keenly interested to know whether or not there was gold in Cuba. Indeed, he seems to have entertained suspicion that it was a treasure cache which his most eminent servants were plotting to loot in secret: when he learned that Diego Colon, Columbus' son, then royal governor in Santo Domingo succeeding Ovando, planned to despatch his uncle, the Adelantado Bartolome Colon, to Cuba,—a project for which he had no authority, and on which he did not make timely report,—the king's interest grew keener yet; he summoned the Adelantado to Spain, precisely, it would seem, to prevent his leading any expedition into Cuba, and he exerted himself to keep informed through more than one channel. He (May, 1509) urged his agents in La Española,—Diego Colon, Bartolome Colon, and the treasurer Miguel de Pasamonte,—to ascertain if there was gold in the island. It seems to have been Ferdinand's idea to send out a prospecting party to determine the fact as to this.

Having had since 1492 ample opportunity to observe that it was not only a spiritual, but also an economic error, to hostilize the natives of gold-bearing

regions, the king had a double reason to wish to keep those of Cuba in the friendly humor toward the Spaniards which they had exhibited to Columbus, and more recently to Ocampo perhaps. He insisted that kindness to the Cubeños must be the policy of the expedition which went to Cuba in response to the royal order to investigate its mineral potentialities.

This expedition may have cleared from La Española very late in 1510; if as is generally accepted, however, it did not get off until 1511, it must have gone early in that year. It was commanded by Diego de Velazquez.

Velazquez had distinguished himself in La Española since his arrival with Columbus in 1493. He had served satisfactorily under three successive governors. Ovando had commissioned him to quiet a rebellious district in the west of that island over five settlements of which when he had mastered it and founded them, Velazquez became lieutenant of the governor. Velazquez had acquired wealth: he was reckoned the richest man in La Española. By the Spaniards who served under him he was admired because of his fine figure, fattening then but still handsome, and because of his graceful presence, his fair face and blonde hair; they liked him for his amiability and for his style of conversation (on topics appreciated by young men not overly well disciplined). They respected him because when occasion demanded he could demonstrate his authority. He was, in fine, a man well equipped by character, experience and fortune, for further leadership.

He can have had little difficulty in fitting out the expedition to conduct which into Cuba he had been selected, presumably by Governor Colon, who, however, must have been strongly influenced (consciously or

unconsciously) in his choice, for Velazquez was, or else immediately became, a close friend of the treasurer Miguel de Pasamonte who contributed notably to the very favorable reputation by which Velazquez began soon indeed to profit at court. In fact, Velazquez may have been more Pasamonte's creature than he was Colon's. Pasamonte had held high office before he came to the New World; he had been queen's secretary and Spanish ambassador abroad. He was very powerful indeed in La Española and he was no friend to Colon. It was suspected that Velazquez made their friendship a source of material profit to Pasamonte who possibly shared whatever real profits accrued with the royal secretary Conchillos. I have not seen Velazquez's commission nor is it, I think, known to exist; information as to its stipulations would be a contribution of note to the recorded history of Cuba. Neither have I seen any documents from which any proof may be gathered of the relations existing between Conchillos, Pasamonte and Velazquez. Contemporaries gossiped concerning them and the fact stands out that through Pasamonte Velazquez early established direct communication with the crown and from the first enjoyed surprising independence of the admiral, Colon, in whose name, however, he held his title as *teniente de gobernador* in Cuba. This title is correctly translated governor's lieutenant; in usage of the time Velazquez was called governor. The king's suspicions as to the Colons' intentions with respect to Cuba may have contributed to determine his very favorable attitude toward Velazquez. It is not beyond the possibilities of the period that these suspicions were generated precisely to that end by the very persons who profited by that favoritism.

Velazquez was further aided in preparing his expedition by the royal accountant in La Española, his cousin Cristobal de Cuellar. It is probable that Velazquez was already affianced to his daughter, Doña Maria de Cuellar, who came to the New World a lady-in-waiting on Doña Maria de Toledo, wife of the admiral Diego Colon. Despite this detail which presumably indicates friendship between the ladies, Cuellar was not a friend of Colon's.

Velazquez seems to have spent his own money freely on the three or four ships he assembled at Salvatierra de la Sabana in the far west of La Española, convenient to Cuba, where he recruited possibly three hundred men. Colon promised that the crown would refund these expenditures, instructive evidence, I should say, of his friendliness toward the undertakings of the men (Velazquez, Cuellar and Pasamonte) whom documents show to have been much less well-inclined toward him. The king ratified this promise but no indication that he kept it has come to my notice. He did, however, presently place in Velazquez' hands means of reimbursing himself at the expense of the aborigines of Cuba for all his exertions and his outlay.

During the years immediately preceding the departure of Velazquez' expedition into Cuba, many Haytians escaping bondage which the Spaniards had imposed upon them in La Española, had made their way into this island, especially into the eastern part which was readily accessible to them. They enlightened the Cubeños concerning the character and the conduct of the Christians as they had by hard experience found them to be. Among these fugitives was the *cacique* of a western province of La Española,—the

very region which had reason to understand Velazquez best,—whose name was Hatuey (or Inhatuey). Accompanied by many of his subjects he had fled into eastern Cuba and was there established as a chieftain of importance when Velazquez began to recruit his expedition. Las Casas says that Hatuey was informed by spies of the Spaniards' activities and of their object. Immediately he commenced to incite the Cubeños to resistance, maddening them with relation of what the Haytians had endured,—outrage, slaughter and slavery,—confidently assuring them that a similar fate awaited them unless the white invaders were successfully repulsed.

As a result of Hatuey's propaganda, it would appear, Cuba showed itself hostile to Velazquez and his men. They found themselves involved soon after their landing in an active campaign against the natives whom they hunted into the mountains. Hatuey was betrayed into their hands and was burned at the stake, to the last refusing all consolations of their church, which the Spaniards offered him, lest on dying he go to their heaven only to find Christians there! Hatuey's death did not end the struggle: a follower and fellow-countryman of his named Caguax assumed leadership of the Cubeños.

Velazquez established his base of operations at Baracoa and in so doing made the first permanent settlement in Cuba. He called the place Nuestra Señora de la Asuncion, but it is the aboriginal name, Baracoa, which has persisted as that of the oldest city in the island, the first capital.

Velazquez built a fort. Its site can hardly be determined now since it collapsed a very few years later.

Other necessary buildings were erected, all unquestionably of the very humblest sort,—“of straw” the Spaniards described them, meaning, of course, *bohios* of bamboo or possibly of palm board reinforced with adobe, and thatched with palm leaves. Their surroundings must have been much as are Baracoa’s to-day. The bay there is round and perfect as the illustration of that word in a primary geography. Outside, the marvellous blue of the ocean breaks into white along the coast. Hills are to landward, all thickly cloaked with dark green; their valleys are tangled jungles. To this day no roads prevail against the riotous vegetation. Except as horsemen and pack-trains thread the trails of the hinterland, Baracoa is even yet inaccessible except by sea. The region is not now reputed to be productive of gold, but Velazquez’ followers, panning its rivers by proxy, got interesting returns and a generation after them revived lost interest in its mines.

Shortly after he had established himself at Baracoa, Velazquez was joined by thirty expert crossbowmen who arrived from Jamaica, where they had served under that island’s first governor, Esquivel. They came accompanied by native Jamaican servants and under the leadership of Panfilo de Narvaez. This young man,—tall and blonde, not to say red-headed, honorable, intelligent, a pleasant conversationalist, quick to fight (either aborigines or others), but a careless leader,—was a native of Valladolid in Spain which is near Velazquez’ former home, Cuellar. He was devoted to Velazquez. Velazquez welcomed him to his service and made him his second in command in Cuba.

He sent him out from Baracoa presently at the head of a force consisting of a hundred infantry and eight

mounted men. This force, moving west from Baracoa, penetrated a rich region the Spaniards called by the aboriginal name of Bayamo: it was the same general district still so designated. Narvaez reported the attitude of the natives to be menacing and Velazquez sent him reinforcements of fifty men, ten of them mounted.

Velazquez, repeating possibly the wording of his own commission,—certainly at least reflecting the king's notion of what this first expedition into Cuba should be,—had especially instructed Narvaez to assure the natives that his object on this march was only to see the country, to inform them of the allegiance they owed to the crown of Spain, and he was to impress upon the Cubeños the Christians' good intentions not to injure but to convert them. Thus was the actual conquest of Cuba undertaken in perfect accordance with great policies which, emanating from Castile but especially now from Aragon, were felt at the time in every European court from the Golden Horn to the Pillars of Hercules. In the antipodes an obscure governor's lieutenant's lieutenant, hacking his way through a primeval jungle, stepped forward in exact measure with the greatness, and with the smallness, of "the Catholic Kings," for these beneficent anxieties lest the natives of Cuba be alarmed arose directly out of Ferdinand's sordid rapacity,—he was less tender of aborigines where no gold was to be expected; the demand for confessed allegiance explains itself, and the intention to convert was Isabella's political policy of effective union, in "the faith," via obliteration of all racial distinctions.

Between the letter of Narvaez's instructions and his execution of them there was the usual discrepancy.

The further inland the Spaniards advanced, the more unwelcome the Cubeños made them. For instance, one night while they slept soundly in a certain village, a multitude of natives attacked with a sudden yell, which brought the Christians out of their dreams but not completely to their senses. Fortunately for them the Cubeños were more anxious to seize their clothes,—treasures greatly coveted by the naked savages,—than they were to kill the owners. Narvaez was hit in the pit of the stomach by a stone which bowled him over; he arose, however, and now thoroughly awake, saddled his lively mare which had been sharing his sleeping quarters with him, threw a string of bells across the beast, mounted, and so,—clad only in his shirt,—he rode forth, charging pell-mell through the village, spreading terror among the natives to whom the horse was an unearthly monster and the jingle of bells a strange infernal sound. Presently Narvaez reported that he had been unable to observe the orders he had to avoid fighting the natives; he informed Velazquez that he had fallen into an ambush in getting out of which he had killed "a hundred" and thereby brought, he said, the whole district of Bayamo into tranquil service of the king of Spain. He had not, nevertheless, been so successful in accomplishing this, but Velazquez found it necessary to go himself into Bayamo along the route Narvaez had taken, to "reassure" the natives in his own fashion. While so busied he sent Narvaez and his men in pursuit of those Cubeños who with their families and their trifling possessions had fled westward into that portion of Cuba then, as now, called Camaguey. Wherever he went Narvaez spread terror.

Caguax was killed. The natives were left not only

leaderless but hungry. Owing to disturbed conditions and to dry weather, those of the Bayamo district had neglected their crops. Because the climate prevented safe storage it was not the custom of the Cubeños to lay up any reserve supplies. The natives of Camaguey had only enough food stuffs for their own maintenance: they did not welcome panicky immigrants from Bayamo, for they foresaw famine. Narvaez returned to Bayamo from his campaign westward and presently the natives of that region began to reappear in the homes they had deserted; in token of submission they brought him presents of the bone necklaces which they prized.

When he arrived in Bayamo, Narvaez found that Velazquez had returned to Baracoa, leaving in temporary charge at Bayamo his nephew, "a beardless youth" named Juan de Grijalva, and with Grijalva as adviser a priest called Bartolome de las Casas, the good *clerigo*. This is the man whom posterity honors as "The Protector of the Indians," whose fanatical champion he became, and as the author of a *History of the Indies*, which is one of the best sources of information extant concerning the earliest Spanish activity in the New World, especially in the matter of the conquest of Cuba, large part of which las Casas was.

Over these two and the men with them Narvaez assumed command. At the head of the considerable party which these and his own hundred and fifty men formed, he now pressed forward in westerly direction through Cuba, frankly seeking gold.

They found it and sent Velazquez samples. He, for his part, forwarded the precious metal as fast as obtained toward the king who expressed himself as delighted at the prospect it opened and suggested the

despatch from La Española of trained and skilful miners under some person who might be relied upon to tolerate no deception such as had been attempted at Trinidad where those who found gold denied it in hopes to augment their share of such profits. It would be impossible to identify the vicinities in Cuba where this gold was found were it not known that it was the location of the mines discovered which decided the situation, near them, of the cities Velazquez founded in this and in the following few years.

From Bayamo Narvaez seems to have returned to Camaguey; his exact route cannot be proven. He passed through a village las Casas calls Cueyba, where the Spaniards saw the natives worshipping an image of the Virgin Mary which castaway countrymen of theirs had left there some two years before; it has been assumed that this image was that same which is still adored at her shrine in eastern Cuba as Our Lady of Cobre. The Cubeños sang and danced before her in their own style of expressing devotion. They kept her little oratory clean and decorated, and spirited her away from the place when the good *clerigo* suggested they exchange her with him for an image he carried.

The people of Camaguey prepared bread, meat and fish in advance for the invaders, in all the villages where they were expected. To avoid conflicts,—the lustfulness of the Spaniards was resented by the Cubeños,—las Casas the priest, with a few of his immediate following, preceded the main body of Spaniards into the towns; he had the natives vacate half of each village, which was then given over to the Christians while they stayed. The natives were supposed to keep to the other half. Later las Casas merely advanced messengers carrying

a piece of paper on a stick, to command the natives to arrange accommodations in this manner, and to prepare their children for baptism on penalty of the good *clerigo's* displeasure, a mandate which was obeyed for they loved and reverenced him and feared and respected his letters which seemed to them to work wonders since they conveyed his meaning over distance between him and his kind. The "miracle" of writing was beyond their comprehension; "they marvelled at it."

Las Casas did not, however, invariably succeed in preventing trouble. He relates, for instance, how toward noon on a certain day as they rested in the bed of a creek the Christians nicely sharpened their swords on some suitable stones. That afternoon they crossed a plain where they suffered somewhat from thirst; the natives came out with calabashes of water, and food. Toward nightfall the Christians arrived at a large village called Caonao where plenty of *cazabe* bread had been prepared with a great supply of fish, for there was a river near, and the sea. Two thousand natives, according to the *clerigo's* account (he is to be mistrusted in his estimates of numbers), gathered in the village square, squatted on their heels, staring amazed at the horses the Spaniards had. Five hundred more, he says, were shut up in a great house close by; when the native servants of the Spaniards, whose camp-followers numbered a thousand, the historian remarks, sought to enter there those within offered them fowls to bribe them to stay out. While the Spaniards whom Narvaez had assigned to that duty were doling out the evening's rations, and the priest las Casas was watching this done, a certain Spaniard who, he says, they thought must have been possessed of a devil, drew his sword and in a

trice the Christians were busy, slashing, disembowelling, slaughtering the naked multitude which a moment before had squatted there, admiring their steeds. They entered the great hut and continued the massacre until it ran blood like a shambles. Las Casas and five men were in the square where forty Indians who had carried the Christians' luggage were resting; the five, on hearing the clash of steel and cries, houses aroundabout preventing them from seeing what was transpiring elsewhere, were for killing those forty where they huddled, but the priest succeeded in dissuading them from doing this. They spared those forty "and went off to kill where the others were killing." Las Casas came up to Captain Narvaez, mounted on his mare; the dead lay all around. "What does your reverence think of this that our Spaniards have done?" inquired Narvaez, "and the *clerigo*, seeing before him so many cut to pieces," was, he admitted, carried away by anger so that he answered: "You and them all I offer to the devil!" "For Narvaez, from his horse, had seen all that occurred nor raised his pike to prevent the holocaust." From him the priest turned away and went from place to place after the Spaniards trying to deter them from killing the natives they were hunting down in the adjacent bush. Entering the big hut he told the Cubeños hidden in the rafters to come down since the slaughter was over, and one who came down weeping, "a young man of twenty-five or thirty, well set up," was presently disembowelled by a soldier, las Casas having passed on in his work of mercy; this young man, holding his entrails in his hands, rushed out of the hut and met the priest, who recognized him and offered him all the consolation that he could offer: religion, which

the unhappy creature accepted as he fell dead. Another, "they even said he was the brother of the king or chief of that province,—old, well-built, patrician in aspect,"—sat back against a tree, half of his body from shoulder to waist lying on the ground beside him, severed by a single blow of a Spanish sword, and there he remained, living at the end of a week, when the Spaniards marched away leaving Caonao soaked in blood. "Of all which," las Casas says in closing his relation of it, "I am a witness, for I was there and I saw it, and I omit many details for brevity's sake." The Spaniards, proceeding westward from Caonao, found the country deserted: "no suckling nor chirping thing remained, the massacre being known." The natives abandoned the island itself, seeking safety on the little keys along the shore!

Las Casas labored to reassure them and presently they came back, "men and women like sheep, each with his little bundle of poverty upon his back," and with gifts for the Christians. "To see them come caused joy for they were returning to their homes, which was what was wanted, and it caused pity and great compassion, considering their meekness, humility, poverty, what they had suffered, their banishment, their weariness, brought upon them through no fault of theirs, the slaughter of their fathers, sons, brothers and neighbors, so cruelly accomplished,—all, all being set aside as done with and forgotten."

The Spaniards now established themselves at a point on the north coast where they found gold. They made themselves at home in a native village built on piles over water, and there they were so well fed on parrots and other delicacies that they corrupted the native name

of the district to Casaharta (house replete); a further corruption or perhaps a correction of the corruption seems to persist yet in the name Carahatas of a vicinity near Sagua in the modern province of Santa Clara.

Previous to this time Narvaez had heard that a man and two women, survivors of some wrecked caravel, were held prisoners by the natives of regions still further west. He informed Velazquez of this and Velazquez from Baracoa sent a light-draft well-provisioned brigantine west along the coast. Overland a courier came with orders to Narvaez to leave men at work where gold had been found, to endeavor to get possession of the man and the women, and to keep watch for the brigantine. Father las Casas sent messengers with his magic papers on sticks into the west and the two women presented themselves, having been released by their captors. They were naked as Eve, so the priest made them clothes of cloaks the Spaniards gave up for the purpose, and promptly married them off to two willing members of the expedition.

These women told of seeing the natives wash gold out of a stream and beat it into *guanines*, as the natives' trinkets were called. To find this stream the whole expedition now moved on, from Casaharta into the aboriginal Havana province, which seems to have been approximately the same territory Habana province is to-day. They travelled in canoes by sea and overland on foot and horse when it was rough on the water.

They found the district deserted, and lacking guides they made no headway. They sought the natives, who seemed to have vanished, and las Casas sent reassuring messages ahead. Presently they encountered a chief who the two women said they recognized as one who

had drowned companions of theirs treacherously. The Spaniards suspected him of plotting a like fate for them and of having placed his men in ambush to make sure of finishing them off. They took him and his party prisoners and were for burning them at the stake, but it seems that las Casas protested vigorously and eventually they released all except the chief himself whom they kept in chains for the time being. At all events, they got on and came to the stream of which the women had told them. Here they found some little gold,—enough at least to create hope that more existed.

Another chief now came forth to welcome them with presents; and he delivered to them the Spaniard of whom they had been hearing,—one Garcia Mexia. He had almost forgotten the Spanish language; he squatted on his heels and gesticulated like a native to the very great amusement of his compatriots. He and the two women were all that were left of a party of twenty-seven castaways from a ship wrecked on the far west end of Cuba as it sought Santo Domingo from Alonso de Hojeda's starved settlement of San Sebastian at Uraba. Their number had diminished as they struggled eastward; some a certain chief hung and others were drowned by natives who enticed them into canoes on pretence of ferrying them over an arm of the sea which may have been Matanzas Bay. That name means "slaughter" and it may commemorate their massacre there.

Meanwhile the brigantine which Velazquez had sent west from Baracoa arrived off the north coast of Havana, and Narvaez and his men hailed it into the port where they lay encamped waiting for it. It remained there while they, acting on Velazquez's orders, went to

meet him and another party he led at a rendezvous he had appointed,—the port of Xagua now called Cienfuegos,—at the time,—Christmas of 1513,—which he had set.

After the Christmas holidays had been spent at Xagua and near there, Velazquez sent Narvaez and a hundred men back to Havana. Sixty of Narvaez's men marched by land (from Xagua), reconnoitring and treating with the native chiefs. Narvaez had taken to Xagua with him that *cacique* who was charged with drowning Hojeda's castaways; Velazquez reproved him for his treachery, but gave him gifts and returned him to his own territory where, Velazquez said later, he brought his people into their towns to dwell as they had dwelt before the advent of Christians. Later under Narvaez himself the Spaniards pushed further west than they had gone before, evidently obeying Velazquez's instructions to explore with the coöperation of the brigantine which awaited their return; they penetrated presumably well into what is now Pinar del Rio province. I have found no account of this incursion. It completed the occupation of Cuba.

## CHAPTER III

### “THE PESTILENCE OF THE REPARTIMIENTO”

“*Por esto fué conquistador e a su costo ganó para su magestad la isla e tenía provision de su magestad para dar los indios á quien el quisiere.*”—Pero Perez, *A de I*, 47, 2, 8/3.

In La Española before the conquest of Cuba began there had taken definite form a peculiar system of bondage of the native to the invader known as the *repartimiento*. The word means a permanent dividing up,—a portioning out of the aborigines to the service of the Spaniards. *Encomienda* is used as a synonym although this word carries the idea of temporary “commendation,” i. e., a terminable tutelage. The theory of the *repartimiento* was beneficent. To gentle Christian masters who were to instruct them in the faith and to feed, clothe and house them also, while training them to do useful work, were “commended” gentler Cubeño servitors who were thus to be civilized on earth and saved in heaven. That the Spanish master profited by the work which his commended natives did, was a matter of course. His too was the responsibility, to his God and to his king, for the welfare here and hereafter of the souls and of the bodies so committed to him.

The theory of the *repartimiento* was indeed beneficent, but in practice the system was slavery: slavery of the untutored, hungry, naked, shelterless native, worked

to his death like a valueless beast of the field by masters of whom neither their conscience nor the law ever demanded any adequate accounting. This grievous conflict between the theory and the practice of the system was never reconciled except in the elimination of the natives who were ground out of existence between the mill stones of the high Castilian ideal of justice and the remorseless interpretation of it by individual Spaniards. Amazing contrasts such as this between admirable ideals embodied in excellent laws, and reprehensible execution of them have always been, as Hume says, a peculiar feature of Spain and of her settlements. The contradiction however may not be damned as simon-pure hypocrisy. If analyzed it can be otherwise explained.

It was with every intention to obtain control and service of natives under the *repartimiento* system in order to use them to gather gold, that the Spanish swarmed into Cuba in 1512-13, almost emptying La Española, just as later they swarmed over Cuba and on, into Mexico and into Peru, leaving this island in its turn almost depopulated of whites.

Velazquez found himself in a serious dilemma, because he had no authority to "commend" the Cubeños to his followers; his men insisted they must have *encomiendas* (i. e., such allotments,—assignments of natives), especially those of the expedition who remained at Baracoa (summer of 1512) engaged in the unromantic drudgery of building up a town while Narvaez fared blithely forth to shed blood and perhaps to find more gold than they were finding, and Velazquez himself got his share of action in following after Narvaez to "pacify" the region around Bayamo when it vigorously resented Narvaez's

performances. They threatened to abandon his dull camp at Baracoa and to leave the island, returning to La Española whence they had come with anticipations of pleasanter things.

The head of early discontent, because of Velazquez's disability to assign the Cubanos to servitude under the *repartimiento* system, was Francisco Morales, who, it appears, did actually capture and use the natives of the Maniabon (Manzanillo?) district over which Velazquez had made him lieutenant. They revolted against him and some Christians were killed. In his conflict with Morales the king vigorously upheld Velazquez, as was but logical inasmuch as his difficulties seem to have arisen largely from too close obedience of royal commands. Admiral Colon was ordered to authorize Velazquez to proceed against Morales with all rigor, that his sentence might be a memorable example to Cuba, documents containing such authorization to be delivered by the admiral to Pasamonte for despatch. At the same time, lest the admiral overlook the matter, the king issued a communication to Velazquez direct to this same effect, which Pasamonte was to instruct him to use if necessary,—so great independence had the governor's lieutenant in Cuba already attained! It seems, however, that Velazquez shipped Morales to La Española to be dealt with by the authorities there.

Morales' partisans who remained at Baracoa sought to get their complaints heard in Santo Domingo; their emissary was to be Velazquez's own secretary, Hernando Cortes, the man in whose future lay the conquest of Mexico. Velazquez discovered his disloyalty, imprisoned and was inclined to hang him, but friends interceded and Velazquez not only pardoned him but

also later showed him small favors which were high honors to one in the very humble station Cortes at this time occupied. It was in these days, at Baracoa, that Cortes somewhat reluctantly married Catalina Xuares, his first wife, and here too he laid the small beginning of his amazing fortune in that he sweated a few thousand *pesos* in gold out of the natives who presently fell to his lot.

It was to forestall recrudescence of disorder such as Morales had occasioned,—to prevent his men from leaving the island or else seizing what he could not provide without defying the letter of the king's express commands,—that Velazquez hurried back to Baracoa from Bayamo at the time that he left Juan de Grijalva with las Casas as his adviser to await the return of Narvaez from Camaguey.

Moreover, Velazquez had word that a brigantine had put in at Baracoa from La Española aboard which was Cristobal de Cuellar, appointed to be the king's treasurer in the island of Cuba; he was so chosen out of consideration for money he spent in helping to equip the expedition which had taken possession of the country. His colleagues in office,—accountant and factor,—appeared later to complete a trio of royal officials such as existed in Santo Domingo.

Cuellar's daughter, Doña Maria, accompanied him and she and Velazquez were married at Baracoa (early in 1513) with all the pomp the nascent settlement could display; but the following Saturday Velazquez found himself a widower. “Sadness and mourning were twice what the rejoicing had been. It seemed God desired that lady for Himself, for they say that she was most virtuous, and by untimely death He saved her perhaps

from time and prosperity which might have altered her admirable character."

Discovering no other way out of his dilemma, Velazquez now determined to give Cubeños to the men under him; but still lacking any real authority to do so, he sought to protect himself against royal displeasure, if this should be aroused, by the appearance of the manner in which he assigned them. As in La Española the *repartimiento* system was timid in its beginning in Cuba.

Velazquez assigned the Cubeños to the service of the Spaniards for one month, only, for which period of labor they were to be paid; at the end of it they were to be dismissed and permitted to return to their homes. He sent his men out in parties of twenty, each with an interpreter, to bring the natives in, especially from the Maysi district which might most readily be adjudged to have forfeited favor, because of Hatuey's "rebellion." When the natives came in, in obedience to such imperative summons, Velazquez said he kept the people of each village together. He commanded that the Cubeños be well treated, named inspectors to see that they were so, and himself made rounds of supervision over all. At the end of the month, he declared, the Cubeños were paid off, "as in La Española," given food for their journey home, and let to go.

It must be borne in mind that Velazquez's account of this matter, from which I am writing, was intended for the eye of the king, without whose authority Velazquez had been constrained to act,—that king who had repeatedly commanded that the Cubeños be treated with less rigor than the Haytians and the Porto Ricans had been, not only for the reason that he gave,—that

he held them in particular esteem and desired above all things to convert them to the faith for which Velazquez himself had reported that they showed exceptional aptitude,—but also for the even more obvious reason that if hostilized and decimated they would not and could not produce as much gold as might be expected of them if well managed and well conserved. It is quite possible that in point of fact not all those natives whom Velazquez's scouting parties had brought into Baracoa for that initial month's service did return, “very happy,” as he put it, to their palm-thatched distant huts; for he adds that the Spaniards were “satisfied and lost the ill-will they had,” which would hardly have been their state of mind had they been obliged to see all their workmen go at the end of that brief period, accustomed as they had already become in La Española to the more permanent advantages of indefinite *repartimiento*.

During this month Velazquez not only washed for gold but he planted food-crops. Nothing is more indicative of Velazquez's innate ability than this: he had foresight such as no other *conquistador* under similar circumstances (on the Isthmus of Darien, for instance) had developed it, to plant early that he and his men might have enough to eat. He planted indigenous crops: the natives understood their cultivation and the Spaniards were already accustomed to eat them,—*yuca* to make *cazabe* bread, maize, *malangas*, *boniatos*, squash,—the crops, in short, which to this day sustain the rural population of Cuba. The king ordered experiments in the cultivation of rice.

Houses for the Spaniards' permanent habitation were erected. All pretence that they did not expect

to remain was, apparently, dropped. Married men sent for their wives; when it was reported to him that difficulties were laid in the way of the women who desired to follow their husbands from La Española into Cuba, the king reprimanded Admiral Colon and expressed a wish at variance with his earlier views that Velazquez's expedition should be considered a prospecting party only, for he now desired the Spanish settlement in Cuba to become permanent in the establishment of families there. Marriages between Spaniards and natives were legal.

Among the buildings which Velazquez erected was a warehouse to shelter the king's share of the proceeds from the country; and he cared for the king's estate, laid out on the river bank "where Hatuey had resided." Ferdinand had his personal interest in all the lines of exploitation undertaken, and so too, unfortunately for the Cubeños, had all his ministers and agents from highest to humblest. The king expected his estates to be models in remunerativeness by which the rest might pattern, and yet as early as 1521 he was informed that his *encomiendas* were unprofitable and advised to distribute most of them among the colonists.

These things done and affairs in the village settled into good order, Velazquez set out on October 4, 1513, for Xagua (Cienfuegos) where he had ordered Narvaez and all his party not engaged in gold mining to meet him at Christmas time. He was informed that Sebastian de Ocampo, now a trader, had left at Xagua four Spaniards and three casks of wine, when en route to Santo Domingo from Castilla del Oro on what was perhaps his last voyage.

Velazquez stopped by the way (November, 1513)

to found what has since become the city of Bayamo. The original site, which he selected because of the land's fertility and the general adaptability of the district to crops and cattle, was within a league and a half of the present-day south-coast port of Manzanillo. It was beside the River Yara and he called the place San Salvador because it was near there that the Christians were "saved" from the *cacique* Hatuey. The location so chosen for the second city in Cuba was not, be it observed, the present site of Bayamo; and therefore the interesting *ceiba* tree across the bending River Cauto from the present town which the inhabitants are fond of pointing out to tourists can hardly be the very tree beside which that brave Haytian met martyrdom.

Again as at Baracoa Velazquez sent his men out to bring in natives and these he portioned out to labor. For the Christians they built a church and they cultivated crops for them and for their king.

While he was so busied at Bayamo Velazquez received letters from the king addressed to him in person; they were in the nature of a reply to others he had written which Pasamonte had forwarded to court. The tone and content of these communications made it even more unmistakable that Ferdinand proposed to recognize his captain Velazquez as independent in very considerable sense of the authority of Admiral Colon.

In these communications the king gave his entire approval to everything that Velazquez said that he had done. In indication of it he not only made him warden with salary of the fortress he had built at Baracoa (a profitable sinecure Velazquez enjoyed all his

life which was not continued to his successors), but he also made him what was far more important,—his *repartidor* of the natives of Cuba, empowered to assign them among the Spaniards for service.

There were no specific instructions as to the terms on which such allotments were to be made. Velazquez was to report on the Cubeños available and meanwhile using his best judgment and bearing the king's kindly intentions in mind, he was to begin to allot them, such assignments to hold, however, only during the king's pleasure, the express intention being to make changes possible if Velazquez's methods were not approved. In this particular capacity of *repartidor* Velazquez was responsible to the crown only from which emanated his appointment and his power. Admiral Colon, judges of the law court established in Santo Domingo, and royal officials of La Española, were informed that the king considered Velazquez, because he was on the ground, to be the most competent person to represent his majesty in the delicate position of arbiter of the destiny of a subject race; they, however, might furnish him with written signed advice as to methods to employ in making *encomiendas*. It is easy to appreciate the tremendous material advantage to Velazquez of the signal favor of this peculiar office so conferred on him: it lay with him, now, to make or break any other Spaniard in the island.

Velazquez immediately proclaimed his appointments as warden and *repartidor* at Asuncion (Baracoa) and at San Salvador (Bayamo). He then began to "commend" the natives beginning as was prescribed with the king's treasurer, Cristobal de Cuellar, who got 200 head, and with the men of his expedition; later

he provided for persons who arrived recommended to him by royal letter. He assigned them such and such chieftains, named by name, with the people of their village or immediate neighborhood, all of whom, though they were not slaves in that they could not be legally sold or otherwise transferred, were nevertheless to serve their Spanish masters during the governor's pleasure; the Spaniard who received such a grant obligated himself to feed and to clothe and to instruct these Cubeños in the Christian religion. The natives so held were *encomendados*; each lot constituted an *encomienda*, and their masters were *encomenderos*. Before 1522 the maximum size of an *encomienda* was set at 300 head; prior to that year some Spaniards possessed larger allotments, and doubtless some few (or at least Manuel de Rojas) continued to hold more than the permissible number even after (in 1522) the maximum *encomienda* was supposed to be 200 to officials; 100 to principal citizens; 60, medium *encomienda*; and 40 minimum. Original titles to *encomiendas*, signed by Velazquez himself, have passed through my hands in the Archive of the Indies at Seville.

Title to an *encomienda* did not carry with it title to the land on which the "commended" Indians lived and labored. That was, however, usually vested in the *encomendero* (except when he was an absentee) by way of a *vecindad*, i. e., a "residence," the recipient of which grant became thereby a *vecino*, that is, a resident landowner. An *encomendero* was not necessarily a resident in the island; for instance, government officials in La Española and in Spain,—Secretary Conchillos and Admiral Colon for example,—were masters of *encomiendas* in Cuba which possibly they

never saw. Neither did a *vecino* necessarily receive Cubeños *encomendados* with his grant of lands, especially not in later years when the supply of land outlasted the supply of natives. Nevertheless the actual colonists of Cuba in these early days usually owned the land as *vecinos* which the Cubeños native thereto worked for them as *encomenderos*. Their title to the soil was perpetual and alienable; their title to its inhabitants was revocable and non-transferable. *Encomiendas* were, however, sold with the lands under them, though the fiction that they could not be so disposed of was maintained.

Indians who had been removed for any reason from their native habitat, usually to serve the Spaniards as body- and house-servants, were called *naborias*; title to use them was had from the *repartidor* as in the case of *encomendados*. Neither *naborias* nor *encomendados* are to be confused with still a third class among the aborigines,—the slaves proper, who were branded in the forehead as such, like any other cattle. These were Cubeños taken in battle,—for to punish Hatuey's “rebellion” Ferdinand decreed that all so taken should be so enslaved and the measure was at the same time made extensive to all the Indies. Also wretched people from other parts,—from adjacent islands, from Mexico and from Tierra Firme,—who declined “to come into service” when formally “required” to do, were presently brought into Cuba in considerable numbers and there disposed of by absolute sale, even after the *cedula* making such slavery illegal had been cried in Santiago (Nov. 3, 1531).

When he was called to an accounting for the manner in which he had exercised his offices, not even Velaz-

quez's heirs denied that as *repartidor* he looked well to his own personal interests in assigning *encomiendas*; men who were in business partnership with him (presently at many points all over the island, like his cousin Manuel de Rojas, and Juan Escrivano and his brother Juan de Soria, all at Bayamo, Juan de Alia at Havana, Juan Rodriguez de Cordoba at Sancti Spiritus, Alonso Rodriguez at Guaniguanico, and perhaps others still), received choice and large allotments and felt exceedingly secure in their tenure. Neither, it seems, was Velazquez unaccustomed to exact the best of a bargain from these business associates of his when it came to settlement between them and him.

An incautious student of this period might readily suppose that in their relations to the natives of America both Isabella and Ferdinand were animated solely by aspiration to maintain a terrestrial paradise in the western world and crowd heaven with happy souls that would have been forever lost but for the providential intervention of good Catholic masters. Certainly the crown did ardently desire to compass the spiritual welfare of all the peoples by God committed to its care, including the unreckoned populations of the western hemisphere. It desired to confer upon them the boon of the Catholic religion. To convert unbelievers to the holy faith was a mission laid on the Spanish crown by the Almighty; and of the wearers of that crown the Almighty exacted responsibility. This conviction inspired Isabella and in his latter years certainly it disturbed Ferdinand and made him anxious in his attitude toward the aboriginal populations of his new possessions.

Documents I have studied in this matter incline me

to believe that toward the end of his life, when those great worldly hopes he had set his heart upon turned ashes, what treasures he might have laid up in heaven assumed to Ferdinand of Aragon an importance which outweighed then what had been the dominating characteristic of all his life: most sordid greed. It is not difficult to imagine that there shows through the royal communications on this subject issued in his declining years, the very real terror he had come to feel lest on dying he find himself face to face not with saved and happy multitudes, but with legions of souls lost through all eternity through the faithfulness of his agents in too closely obeying not the letter of his orders but that spirit of greed which had guided him all his life; their acts, as he reminded them, must weigh on him at the Last Judgment, and not on them.

Charles V. inherited the fearful responsibility, and also apparently his grandfather's latter-day desire to investigate into the actual situation of his "free and loyal vassals," the natives of all America. Turning from secular officials, he confided the execution of his protective commands to churchly orders, only to find in holy men avarice he said he had believed them above entertaining. Greed remained uncontrolled. Touch of the gold the natives mined corrupted all it reached, even the dignitaries of church and state seated in the king's own council,—even the crown itself,—if indeed there had remained in Spain's highest places anything not years since corrupted by that other equally corrosive wealth smelted out of Judaism and Islam in the fires of the Holy Inquisition.

Yet that somewhere in the crown existed conscience seems to me impossible to doubt in view of the fact

that when that fanatical Dominican, the good *clerigo*, Bartolome de las Casas, only an unimportant priest "from Indies," did finally make himself heard in the royal ear, his *vox clamantis* denouncing the depopulation of the Indies in the name of God and humanity bore weight against an opposing influence the might of which it is difficult to over-estimate. The king of Spain could not content himself with material profits only; gold of the Indies was welcome to him, but nevertheless to his memory let it stand (be he Ferdinand or Charles), that he put high value on saved souls set down to his credit in his Catholic heaven.

He came to accept finally the viewpoint of those of his advisers who agreed with las Casas that the natives of Cuba were indeed free men. He decreed their absolute liberty and recalled governor after governor who failed to effect it until a man was found to enforce the unwelcome order despite opposition of all the island. That most of the persons it was intended to liberate were by that time dead merely demonstrates the truth of the Spanish proverb concerning "*El socorro del español. . .*" The Spaniard's relief arrives late.

Or it may be that it arrived when it was timed to arrive, after all, for the natives being mostly dead they were then no longer an element either of profit or of possible cleavage in that small portion of the Spanish state which Cuba constituted. Its political and economic utility gone, it is true that the crusading character of the *repartimiento* system proved insufficient to sustain it; nevertheless, because the souls of the survivors were discovered to be of negligible importance, the reality of the religious aspect of the system must not be denied.

Isabella and Ferdinand dreamed no less devoutly of saving souls because at the same time they were wide awake to the economic worth of the bodies those souls inhabited and to the political feasibility of controlling both, through the *repartimiento* system.

That system was the tangible result of the application to Cuba of the expedient policy by which Isabella of Castile and Ferdinand of Aragon had consolidated the warring kingdoms and antagonistic peoples of the peninsula into a Spain, unified in the only bond which the conflicting characters concerned made possible,—the bond of a fanatic bigoted religious “faith!” That expedient policy was a political (not a religious) policy, yet it was not unwarmed by religious zeal just as it was not entirely uncontaminated by most material of financial considerations. The conversion of the Jews and Moors in Spain had been good politics and profitable business. It was intended that conversion of the natives of the New World also should be both, or at least pay expenses. In Spain the means employed for religious conversion and for the political consolidation which such conversion constituted, had been the Holy Office of the Inquisition: in Cuba the instrument was the *repartimiento* system.

If these statements are to be comprehended, the terms employed must be defined. In Cuba to-day there is obvious lack of religious sincerity; I am convinced that this lack is no new thing,—if there was “irresistible moral force” even temporarily in “the spiritual exaltation” that emanated from Saint Dominic and lit the death fires at Seville, certainly it lost its potency ere it could be at all exerted in Cuba. The colonists who came to Cuba were Catholic as a matter of course, i. e.,

they were generally observant of the formulæ of the Roman church. To be Catholic was to the island's earliest settlers a matter of social and political, rather than of truly religious importance. To be “an old Christian” meant that a man was of “clean” blood, untainted by Jewish or Moorish ancestry, or, generally, by any other nationality than Spanish. When in evidence of fitness for political office, he took depositions of friends and acquaintances to prove his lineage admirable, he declared himself a Christian and proved it by proving himself a Spaniard of uncontaminated origin: his orthodoxy was not brought into question. To be a Catholic was, I repeat, a state of social and political propriety, much as nowadays it is such to have been born in wedlock,—a requirement taken for granted, about which to raise a scandal if lacking. To this day in Seville “to be Catholic” means merely to be of the quality claimed; for instance, a painter tells me his rival uses paint “not as Catholic as it might be,” i. e., its quality is not what it should be. The people were generally observant, as said, of the formulæ of Rome; but these were little more than formulæ nor was the observance of them a matter of vital importance since any lapse could always be condoned for a price, usually a small one at that. There was no moral, corrective force in the clergy; with few individual exceptions the clergy of Cuba through all the period under consideration was ignorant, venal and licentious. When contraband commerce with “heretics” was declared to menace Spanish sovereignty in the island, priests were the oldest and most unrepentant of smugglers,—they were the drinking, gaming “go-betweens” in illicit traffic of their flock with “unbelievers.” One most

curious document do I recall wherein the writer laments the peculiar "theology of the Indies" which tolerated all this.

Of "heretics" (almost synonymous with foreigners), the colonists of Cuba had at no time the holy horror which has been supposed. The visiting stranger's lack of Spanish nationality and orthodox beliefs merely marked him as different from and therefore inferior to the Catholic Spaniard, and so unfitted him for the Almighty's very great concern; they did not in the least disable him from becoming a party to a business transaction, and as time passed it became increasingly evident that the "heretic" might be a jolly good fellow, companionable at dinner as at a game of bowls, even acceptable as husband for a daughter or god-parent to a child, although of course his politico-social handicap of foreign birth and nonconformity was invariably regrettable. The matter of nationality was later made merely a question of expense,—it could be "fixed" for a price (to *componer*, to fix is the significant technical term for the arrangement whereby colonists of foreign origin purchased immunity from government molestation). A lack of orthodoxy could be overlooked except in cases where it was an excuse not a cause for attack.

Certainly if to enforce orthodoxy or even outward observance of entire respect for the Catholic religion had been the true object of the Inquisition it had work early laid out for it in Cuba, the necessity of which must have become increasingly apparent as the years went by. It is true that the Holy Office at times had its agents in the island and equally true that sometimes the devout (Manuel de Rojas and later Francisco Calvillo) pleaded for its activities to purify the moral

atmosphere. There is evidence that *circa* 1517-18 one Juan Muñoz, described as “a Spanish Indian who dressed like a Christian” was burned at the stake and his 200 *pesos* worth of property confiscated in pitiable imitation of the persecution of other “new Christians” in Spain, and there is also evidence that a Spaniard named Alonso de Escalante whose house in Santiago became the *fundicion* suffered the same dread penalty, in Seville, yet cast so far as Cuba the awful shadow of Torquemada became merely a momentary annoyance: the agents of the Holy Office failed to maintain their authority, for the only actions of importance they presumed to take were quickly repudiated by their superiors. The true character of the Inquisition,—religious bigotry made a profitable instrument for the consolidation of the Spanish state,—explains why it never thrived in Cuba: simply because it was not needed. The residents of the island did not at this time possess any property worth confiscating, and there were in the colony no barriers of race, caste or creed sufficiently significant to necessitate elimination by way of the Holy Office. On the continent, in Mexico and in Peru, where there was wealth and native peoples of personality strong enough to require that it be smelted out of them at the stake, the Inquisition thrrove transplanted; not so in Cuba where the *repartimiento* system was sufficient to the requirements of the situation as Spanish statesmanship saw them,—sufficient to make Cuba all Spanish in making it all Catholic (observance of church formulæ being always adequate evidence of Catholicism), and to do it if not at an actual profit to the state, at least at no expense to the crown.

Certainly individual Spaniards who did the con-

quering and the converting of Cuba,—who took possession of the land by arms and maintained that possession by making it Catholic,—expected to find remuneration in their work, and when they cleared with Velazquez from La Española his followers had every intention to interpret most practically the Spanish king's explicit expressions of benevolent intentions toward the Cu-beños.

Velazquez's appointment as *repartidor* and the consequent establishment of the *repartimiento* system in Cuba was the crown's acquiescence in their plans. Such acquiescence was flat contradiction in fact of the king's noble theory with respect to his "free vassals" in the New World; merely because he so contradicted it the crown did not cease to cherish this theory,—far from it! He held it dear and,—as soon as it became politically and economically feasible to do so,—he enforced it in law. Expediency was a large part of morality and of statesmanship in these early days; and who finds the Spaniards' attitude toward native Americans condemnable need not strain his eyes to see in our own times similar instances of amazing discrepancy between professed theory and actual fact.

## CHAPTER IV

### FIRST SETTLEMENT (1512-1515)

*Señalados los lugares para las dichas villas y para cada una señalados los vecinos españoles y repartídolos los indios de la comarca, danse priesa los españoles á hacer sudar el agua mala á los pobres y delicados indios haciendo las casas del pueblo y labranzas y cada español que podía echarlos á las minas y sino en todas las otras granjerías que podían.—Las Casas, Historia de las Indias, IV, p. 39.*

Leaving Baracoa established and Bayamo in course of construction at the hands of Cubeños *encomendados* for whom there came no relief in life from the bondage which had fastened upon them, Velazquez on December 18, 1513, proceeded on his way to Xagua (Cienfuegos); while the rest marched overland he with part of his men coasted alongshore in canoes.

There is some evidence that he found the keys there which Columbus had named Gardens of the Queen populated with gentle people who on his report were doomed to servitude, not in Cuba as he would have preferred, but in La Española, for they were presently declared lawful prey of slaving expeditions from that island. The king consented that they be carried away, with as little disturbance as possible of adjacent gold-bearing regions, to replace the native Haytians who were disappearing fast under treatment inflicted on them by the Christian masters to whom they were “commended.” Presently,—before 1516,—this hunt-

ing privilege was extended, in practice certainly, to slavers from Cuba itself. I am inclined to believe that the aborigines so hunted down, through the Gardens of the Queen, were largely mainland Cubeños who had fled there for refuge.

Velazquez made stops at various points, demanding and receiving, he later reported, the adhesion of numerous chiefs. Not all the island's *caciques* had confessed allegiance to the Catholic king. Finally, as he had planned, his reunited party joined Narvaez's at Xagua and there on one of the islets which adorn that magnificent bay they celebrated Christmas of 1513. Who can doubt that they were cheered by the three casks of wine Ocampo had left there?

From Xagua the Spaniards sallied out in prospecting parties and they found gold. They set Cubeños to panning it out and were pleased with the yield, especially with that obtained from the sands of the Arimao river. That they got gold there determined the site of the next city founded, in January, 1514, to which they gave the name it bears yet of Trinidad.

Two caravels for which Velazquez had asked had arrived (on February 10, 1514) at the port of San Salvador de Bayamo, from Seville via Santo Domingo. One of these Velazquez now despatched to Jamaica to bring a cargo of *cazabe* bread to Trinidad; it had not rained the year before and even the natives were suffering from famine. The other caravel he sent to La Española for horned cattle, mares, maize and other necessary things. It is on record that he was very slow in paying for some of the goods he got.

While in this eminently practical and equally laudable manner Velazquez was laying the foundations

of Cuba's future prosperity in encouraging agriculture and the cattle industry, and commerce (with Castilla del Oro at Darien which the king, prescient that it was the gateway to richer possessions, especially desired Cuba to assist), there was sown in him the noxious seed of his own destruction: for it was while he was at Trinidad at this time that Velazquez heard more definitely of "isles to the north," to discover which he asked leave to try, but this the king in Spain denied to him, bidding him content himself with Cuba and with building up trade between this island and the southern continent.

Presently Narvaez, with a considerable party, departed, as said, for the west. There he founded that settlement which in the course of many vicissitudes became the city of Havana; it had its miserable commencement on the south shore of the aboriginal province of that name, in the vicinity of the mediocre port still known as Batabano.

Velazquez himself returned eastward.

By April 1, 1514, he had established four towns. By August 1, 1515, he had made the number seven, each with its church. These were Baracoa, Bayamo, Trinidad; Sancti Spiritus, Havana and Camaguey (in order not readily distinguished); and Santiago de Cuba, the site of which was determined I think, before mid-April, 1515, the royal officials approving Velazquez's choice of the place.

It was selected because it was an excellent harbor, most conveniently situated with relation to La Española, to Jamaica, and especially to Castilla del Oro. The continent had begun to yield gold and the king was exceedingly interested in encouraging develop-

ment there. He desired to see Cuba and Jamaica become bases of supply for exploration and conquest on the isthmus. Vessels returning from that quarter continued to wreck frequently on the south coast of Cuba. With Christians in possession of the general neighborhood, in settlements at Havana, Trinidad, and around Manzanillo, and at Santiago, such tragedies as befell Hojeda's refugees from San Sebastian and certain of Ocampo's men who were killed near Cabo Cruz, might be avoided. The establishment of Santiago in quite the best location along all that south seacoast was due to the king's interest in this matter. It was the only settlement in Cuba which seems to have had no gold mines in its immediate vicinity to explain choice of the site. Though all were early agreed that a fort there with artillery was desirable it is not shown that any was at this time built. There was, in fact, no real need of any pretentious defense.

That master analyst Hume, writing of "The Spanish People," remarks the persistence among them of "the original Iberian tradition" which he defines to be "a powerful tendency . . . to assert individual liberty and localize patriotism." Spain transmitted to Cuba this "original Iberian tradition,"—"the original Iberian tradition" which compels each Spaniard, and, like him, each Cuban, to discover in himself a singular entity: the force, that is, which in them works for disintegration. It is a force so powerful that the might of mightiest Rome never overcame, but only so codified it that Spain transmitted to Cuba this "original Iberian tradition, modified by Latin organization." That sentence will bear re-reading. I believe that in the fact it states lies the explanation of much in the history

of Cuba which must seem inexplicable unless its meaning be thoroughly understood.

It must be borne in mind that Spain in her development had narrowly missed becoming a peninsular Switzerland. The towns had been powerful. In the struggle between them and the nobility the crown had supported first one and then the other "in order to hold the balance." If the victory of the communities over the feudal element had been complete Spain instead of "a pure despotism depending upon popular but inarticulate consent" might have become a federal republic.

All of this and more, too, lay behind Diego de Velazquez when in Cuba he set about founding towns. The law of the time contained precise instructions for his guidance: in part these rules and regulations antedated Romulus' first survey of the eternal hills of Rome, from which Spain's jurisprudence came! See Leviticus, xxv., 34. Therefore, proceeding as nearly in accordance with them as specific circumstances in each case allowed, in establishing the seven cities of early Cuba Velazquez staked off for each its public square or *plaza*, which was not necessarily an open space since the jail or market might occupy it, and from that as a center he laid out each town. Just as the maximum and minimum sizes of *plazas* were specified by law so too were the width and direction of the streets to lead from them. The town church and the residence of the governor or his representative, and the town hall usually faced upon this *plaza*. On the edge of the city limits as its founders determined them, always with due consideration to possible expansion, there was a strip of land reserved for the use of all the residents.

Indefinitely beyond it in Cuba at this time each municipality exercised the right to grant titles to cattle ranges, hog ranches and farms: the entire island was considered to be divided among the seven cities, but no attempt at delimitation was made. Some land titles seem to have been issued by Velazquez as governor even at dates when the councils also were making grants, and certainly it was to Velazquez that the king addressed himself in recommending persons for *vecindades*.

By right of the authority invested in him by Admiral Colon, Velazquez named the officials of each town he founded,—three *regidores* (councilmen) who constituted the *regimiento*, and a first and second *alcalde*.

The *regimiento* and the *alcalde* sitting together, were the *cabildo* or town council, over which the *alcalde* presided only in the absence of the governor and of his second in authority: at Havana Velazquez installed to represent him, because of the great distance between that settlement and his own seat in the east, a *teniente á guerra*, i. e., a lieutenant with delegated powers to hear law suits appealed from decisions of the ordinary *alcaldes*.

The word *alcalde* which should not be translated mayor, is said to be of Arabic origin and to mean "one who judges;" certainly this was the *alcalde's* primary duty as is further indicated by the name *la justicia* by which he and his second were designated, i. e., "the justice." The *alcalde* was a judge of first instance; appeal from his decisions lay to the governor, and beyond the governor to the *audiencia*.

The *audiencia* was a court which had been established in Santo Domingo prior to the conquest of Cuba. Cuba

was only a part of its wide jurisdiction. Its judges were, on the average, fearless, able, and disinterested men.

Appeal from the *audiencia's* decisions lay to Spain,—to the royal council for the Indies in which body the colonists of Cuba invariably saw the king himself as the practical, not merely the theoretical fount of justice.

Minor officials were the *alguacil*, sheriff, a dependent of the *justicia* whom the governor named; the notaries (*escribanos*) who had to prove efficiency before either the council for the Indies or the *audiencia* of Santo Domingo and held royal commission; and the district *procurador* (attorney), the advocate of the community who was at this time, I believe, chosen by the town council.

In each of his seven settlements Velazquez established as *vecinos* and *encomenderos*, i. e., as owners in perpetuity of the land and as masters during the king's pleasure of its native population, residents of whom history has much to say in later years: Bartolome de las Casas was among the original settlers at Trinidad where in these his unregenerate days he worked his "commended" Indians in partnership with Pedro de la Renteria; Bernal Diaz del Castillo, who had come up from Darien with others who abandoned Pedrarias Davila there, preferred Sancti Spiritus. Vasco Porcallo de Figueroa was an original settler in Camaguey province. Hernando Cortes became an *alcalde* of Santiago de Cuba.

The city of Santiago immediately assumed chief importance among the seven early settlements; it soon became the civil, and also the ecclesiastical, capital of the island despite honors in the shape of a formal title of "city" bestowed on Baracoa and the fact that

Baracoa's church had been made the cathedral. Gradually that first established settlement was deserted until it fell to be "not even the shadow of a city but rather of a rural hamlet."

At Santiago came to reside as well as the governor, Velazquez, also the royal officials on salary: treasurer Cristobal de Cuellar; accountant Amador de Lares, and factor Hurtuno de Isunsolo, in charge for his majesty of the fiscal affairs of the country, i. e., of collecting the crown's revenues into a "three-keyed box." Chief among their royal revenues was the royal "fifth" (which was sometimes an eighth, sometimes a tenth, or less) of the gold mined. Next in importance ranked customs duties payable at the rate of  $7\frac{1}{2}\%$ , and, finally, tithes, and fines imposed for minor infractions of the law; the royal officials were also charged with the remittance to Spain or disbursement in Cuba of these revenues as the king directed, of all which business they were expected to render due accounting.

To Santiago, too, was removed from Bayamo both the custom house and the only smelting plant (*fundicion*) in the country, the operation of which for a given period in the spring of each year became a very important occasion, for then in the presence of the governor and of the royal officials, and of the agent of the royally commissioned inspector of smelting, and of notaries,—and also, alas, until the abuse was remedied, in the even more uncomfortable proximity of his creditors, enthusiastically assembled,—each man was compelled by law to produce that it might be melted and marked, what gold his miners,—they were at first bonded gang-bosses with a share in the result of the labors of his squads of "commended" Cubeños who did

the actual work of digging and washing,—had succeeded in finding during the preceding year. Church and state and those individuals who could prove him indebted to them took their share of it; the residue if any was his own.

"And much gold was had," says Oviedo, "because the island is rich in mines, and live stock from La Española thrived as did all the plants and herbs taken over from here and from Spain. Diego Velazquez looked well to these things and because he was clever he desired not only thanks for what he did but also part of what the soil's fertility brought forth. In fine, the island of Cuba came to be very prosperous and well populated with Christians and full of Indians, and Diego Velazquez very rich. He had such friends near the Catholic king and such was the friendship between him and the treasurer, Miguel Pasamonte, that even had Admiral Colon desired to remove Diego Velazquez from office he could not have done so."

The king himself being of a mind in February of 1515 to subject Velazquez and the royal officials of Cuba to the routine investigation of their administration which was called "*taking a residencia*" was by July dissuaded from doing so, such "*excellent reports*" had he received of their conduct in office. "No man," his majesty wrote in August, when urging his agents at Seville to coöperate with and encourage Velazquez in "*his admirable policy with regard to Cuba*," "*could act more wisely in affairs of that island than he.*"

## CHAPTER V

### THE FLOW AND HIGH-TIDE OF PROSPERITY (1515-1518)

“. . . Esta dicha isla estaba muy poblada ansi de españoles como de yndios e abia en ella muy ricas minas á cuya causa todos los españoles e vecinos de la dicha isla cogian mucha cantidad de pesos de oro e todos estaban ricos e prosperos . . . se hacian muy grandes gastos ansi por los españoles como para los dichos yndios . . . á caros e subidos precios por cuya fama continuamente por espacio de los dichos . . . años vinieron á esta isla muy gran copia de nabios en que venian muy ricos mercaderes que traian e enviaban á sus fatores de todas suertes de sedas, paños ricos é muy finos, ropa blanca de todos suertes, calçado de todas maneras con los aparejos de herramientas necesarios para las dichas minas, vinos, harinas, azeites, vinagre con otros infinitos bastimentos, ropa e mercaderias e calonas de yndios . . . e de cada dia sobrevinieron mas nabios de la calidad de los pasados . . . se descubrieron las tierras nuevas . . . por los cuales se esperaba que dende los reinos de España abian de benir doblados nabios de los que solian venir á esta isla adonde abian de cargar y desde aqui tener contratacion con las dichas tierras nuevas. . . .”  
A. de I., 47, 1, 3/30.

The business of melting down the gold mined drew the settlers of Cuba into Santiago at the time of the *fundicion*, in the spring of the year before the closing down of the rainy season made travel through the country impossible. Then the *procuradores*, representing the town councils and so the several communities of the colony, found it convenient to meet there annually during that period to discuss the needs and desires of their respective constituencies. An *alcalde* of Santiago

presided over their sessions; a notary kept the records of the discussions which followed the formal presentation to the meeting of each district's opinions and requirements as these were embodied in the more or less detailed and restrictive instructions each council had issued to its representative. Out of these conferences was evolved a report on conditions which was also a petition for "remedy" addressed by the *procuradores* in the name of the *cabildos* and therefore of all the colony to the king of Spain. Or, not infrequently, a *procurador general* was despatched to formulate in person what requests his subjects in Cuba desired to make of his most Catholic majesty. This annual conference of *procuradores* was in Cuba the lengthened shadow of the Cortes of Castile; like the Cortes its "legislative power" consisted only of petition and protest to the crown.

The king in Spain was very real and very near to every Spaniard in Cuba despite the divinity which hedged him. The king, or if it were a queen ("muy poderosa señora") upon the Spanish throne, then the queen, was an individual and a friend in the minds of his loyal subjects in this island. To him they wrote,—to his "sacred Catholic royal majesty;" in their letters they kissed his hands and feet, prayed God to guard his royal person in the Almighty's service through a long life and to increase his kingdoms to the advancement of the holy faith by all additions his royal heart desired and the welfare of Christendom necessitated even to the total of all the portion he did not yet control of this mundane sphere! They signed themselves quite frequently as "his very least servants." The monarch was the government: the Spanish mind had reconciled "the

original Iberian tradition" with despotic monarchy. In the Catholic king, greatest of humans and well-nigh even more, individual liberty and presently local patriotism too could recognize a superior and still preserve inviolate "the original Iberian tradition." To the king, therefore, the *vecinos* of Cuba addressed themselves, with an appreciation of his personal identity which gives to all the communications of this period an intimate tone; this, in fading away toward the close of the century, takes with it much of "the human interest" I have found in the archived documents of this first and delightful era, when the humblest Spaniard in the colony of Cuba called on his Virgin and his monarch in every extremity, confident that he personally was an object of the especial consideration of both, and, in dying, consigned his body to the ground and his soul, not always to God but in one instance at least, to his king. To this sentiment in his people in Cuba the crown responded, receiving almost as foreign ambassadors the representatives they sent to court.

In July, 1515, Panfilo de Narvaez and Antonio Velazquez, authorized *procuradores*, went to Spain to present to the king various demands on behalf of the settlers in "the island Fernandina formerly called Cuba." The admirable prince Juan for whom Columbus named Cuba having died, the island had been rechristened Fernandina that the word Juana might not serve as a reminder of "the Catholic kings'" and all Spain's bitter loss, but to avoid confusion in this writing I have disregarded the change: the name Cuba gradually won its way into even official communications and is the designation which has survived.

Also between them Narvaez and Antonio Velazquez

conveyed to the king 12,437 *pesos* in gold, not all the crown's fifth of what had been mined. This figure implies that in four years Cuba had produced more than 62,000 *pesos* of gold, a considerable treasure at that date. While not the first, this was evidently the first large consignment of Cuban gold delivered to the crown. The king (November, 1515) ordered it coined in haste; from it he bade his agents in Seville provide only one-half the most necessary items included in a list which came with the remittance, of what the colony considered necessary to enable it to produce still more of the precious metal. Comprehending Ferdinand's character, Narvaez and Antonio Velazquez had introduced Cuba's various petitions for favor accompanied by her gold and her promise of more.

They asked, among other things, that the Cubeños be "commended" to them and to their heirs in perpetuity, that in such grants earliest settlers be preferred, that the towns be given a *cacique* each, and that persons non-resident in the colony be ineligible to hold *encomiendas*. Unfortunately for the success of this part of their mission, Fray Bartolome de las Casas arrived at court at about the same time fired with fanatic zeal to champion the cause of the Indians. He had resigned to Velazquez the Cubeños apportioned to him when he settled at Trinidad; he was convinced that to retain them imperilled his immortal soul. He had set all Cuba by the ears with his preaching to the effect that the Cubeños were free men, indeed, and that to hold them in *repartimiento* was a damnable sin. He went to Spain prepared to tell king Ferdinand as much as this,—it was to proclaim that the greatest in that land, laymen and clergy alike, were in peril of hell's fires,—

but at this juncture Ferdinand died (January 23, 1516), and the cardinal Fray Francisco Ximenez stood in his place pending the arrival of Charles V. "of Germany" who was in Flanders. To the austere cardinal and to the faces of other high church dignitaries less inclined by character to hear him, and before the most powerful secular officials of the realms, whom he did not neglect to remind that they were beneficiaries of the crime, this inspired fanatic priest denounced with a multitude of horrible detail the abuses which were depopulating the Indies. The answer Narvaez and Antonio Velazquez received to their petition was to address themselves to the tribunal of Jeronimite monks which was about to be established in Santo Domingo.

In July, 1516, Charles informed the superiors of this order of his imperial determination to place the spiritual and temporal welfare of the native population of the Indies in their hands, "as religious persons in whom there could be no greed." "Uncontrolled greed" was recognized as the cause of existing conditions in the New World, conditions such that they "grieved the king, as a Christian." The Jeronimites protested against assuming responsibility in temporal affairs, they warned the king that as the situation of the aborigines improved the royal revenues must decrease, but on the following November 11th, 1516, four of the order sailed from Sant Lucar for Santo Domingo where three of them constituted a curious court thereafter for some time to be considered especially in all matters relating to the diminishing native population of Cuba. Velazquez was duly informed of their mission and instructed to favor them in it. They had become his superiors in respect of his office of *repartidor*, even, and yet I

cannot say that I have seen any evidence that they ameliorated, or otherwise influenced, the condition of the Cubeños. Possibly documents concerning this tribunal in relation to Cuba are to be found outside the Archives of Seville.

Already,—within five years of the commencement of their domination,—the Spaniards were beginning to find the natives of Cuba too few: through Narvaez and Velazquez they asked a provision prohibiting the exportation of Cubeños. Because to equip and despatch slaving expeditions to “adjacent, useless,” i. e., non-gold-producing, islands was expensive, they persuaded the crown to forego payment of one-half of the fifth share in the profits of these nefarious undertakings in which, despite all his professed interest in the welfare of his “free vassals” Ferdinand had been sharing; they further solicited authority to hunt slaves on neighboring islands where there was gold. This petition also was referred to the Jeronimites at Santo Domingo.

Whatever may have been the tribunal’s decision in the matter, all through the year 1516 the Spaniards whose headquarters were Santiago de Cuba found man-hunting expeditions profitable and one such raided islets off Yucatan which Columbus when he discovered them had called the Guanajes. On one occasion twenty-five men remained encamped on one of these islands while the larger of two ships in which they had come returned to Cuba with captives. While this vessel lay off Havana (still situated on the south coast), with but eight men aboard, the rest having gone ashore, the prisoners (las Casas says) broke through the hatches, swarmed on deck, killed those

eight, and, to the stupefaction of the rest who saw from land what transpired, they raised the anchor, hoisted the sails, and made away, back to the islands from which they had been taken. Arrived there they turned their captors' weapons as found aboard ship against the twenty-five Spaniards who had remained behind; these took refuge in the brigantine they had and tried to escape to Darien. Velazquez in Santiago being informed of this matter equipped two ships to go to their rescue, "and from there to discover other islands and lands by which,"—his words, addressed to Diego Colon,—"our Lord and their highnesses might be served by bringing the native population of them into our holy Catholic faith." The Spaniards who went in those ships found the wreck of the brigantine and surmised the fate of the twenty-five. They loaded up with natives, and, in addition to this cargo, they brought back with them, Velazquez reported, 20,000 *pesos* in gold. This was a very encouraging amount,—a fifth as much as all Cuba was producing now in a year with her mines flourishing,—and it was got too in the course of a short excursion much more to Spanish taste than months of mining.

Narvaez and Antonio Velazquez, as general *procuradores* in Spain, had also asked for Cuba authority to equip and clear ships "to explore, with Diego Velazquez's advice, certain neighboring islands," and although this petition was, like others mentioned, referred to the Jeronimites, Velazquez seems meanwhile to have proceeded on the assumption that it would be granted, for late in 1516 he commissioned Francisco Fernandez de Cordoba, a *vecino* and *encomendero* of Sancti Spiritus, to captain another venture similar

to that which found the islets off Yucatan so very profitable. I do not know the terms of this commission or what special authority if any Velazquez had to issue it. It is supposed that Velazquez had a financial interest, perhaps a fourth share, in the expedition when it cleared from Santiago in February, 1517. Fernandez de Cordoba's pilot was Anton Alaminos who had accompanied Columbus upon that disastrous voyage in the course of which the Admiral had touched at points in what is now Central America. There Columbus and those with him including Alaminos saw evidence that much of interest lay beyond that coast; they were at the time, however, in no condition to investigate. Persistent rumor and now recent events all tended to corroborate the First Admiral's frequently expressed opinion that wonders lay further west. Sailing from Axaruco (Jaruco, near Havana), Fernandez de Cordoba continued in that direction; beyond Cape San Antonio he turned slightly south. Though others had previously seen or even visited its coasts, he is generally reckoned to have discovered Yucatan on this voyage.

Eventually his expedition returned,—two ships only and in such condition they had to be left for overhauling in Carenas (the present-day Havana) harbor. Fernandez de Cordoba, full of wounds, made his way home to Sancti Spiritus to die of them there, while those of his followers whom the savages of Yucatan and of Florida (where they touched in returning) had not succeeded in killing scattered through the island to recuperate if they could from the hardships of the experience they had had; some made their way to Velazquez with details of their discovery of that "is-

land," which they found inhabited by warlike people who built edifices of stone with mortar and used the cross in decoration of them; wore clothing, had feather mantles and pompous head-dresses, and displayed ornaments of gold and silver which metals they seemed to hold in slight esteem. With him Fernandez de Cordoba brought captive two Yucatan Indians whom the Spaniards named "old Melchor" and "little Julian": the tales these told set the Christians mad with desire to possess the country they described.

Gonzalo de Guzman, *vecino* of Santiago de Cuba, and a relative of Velazquez's, was sent to court with news of these events. Narvaez was still in Spain, and active on behalf of Cuba though his progress was delayed by Ferdinand's death and consequent disturbance of governmental affairs, but Antonio Velazquez, it would seem, had returned home. Through Guzman Velazquez asked the administration of the new lands he had found and of what others he might discover. Hernando Cortes and Diego de Orellano were sent as *procuradores* in this general matter to Santo Domingo.

Before Fernandez de Cordoba was comfortably dead of his wounds and amid his protests that he was being despoiled of just deserts, Velazquez in mid-January of 1518 commissioned his nephew Juan de Grijalva to continue the discovery which Cordoba had begun. Grijalva embarked on the 25th of that month and year at Santiago in three caravels and a brigantine. En route west they called at Matanzas, to take on supplies prepared by Pedro de Velazquez de Leon on his estate there, and at San Cristobal de la Havana (now definitely removed from the south coast but not yet permanently settled upon its present site) where

other prosperous and therefore prominent *vecinos* aided him to provision his expedition for a year's absence. He also received additional recruits. The last of April (or May 1st?), 1518, Grijalva cleared from Cape San Antonio with two hundred men. When he returned in October of that year he had taken formal possession for Diego de Velazquez and for Spain, of what is now Mexico.

Meanwhile, Velazquez in Santiago (excited out of the sober reason he had up to this point displayed in his administration of affairs), chafed for news of him. He even despatched a ship under Cristobal de Olid after him, to reinforce him if necessary and in hopes to learn more quickly of what he had found. This ship reached the coasts of Mexico but put back to Cuba driven by storms of "the cyclone season." The first news Velazquez got was brought by Pedro de Alvarado whom Grijalva sent back earlier than the rest of his expedition with his wounded and with samples of what he had secured from the natives by barter: collars made of plates of gold, beaten gold trinkets, hollow gold beads, and gold-wrought head-dresses,—such certain indications of treasure to be had for the looting of it as had not theretofore been seen outside dreams of *el dorado*. It occurs to me as possible that Grijalva also asked his uncle for instructions as to colonization; the terms of his commission forbade him to make any settlement.

Grijalva and his men arrived at Matanzas on October 8th and in this port he met Olid who had put in there with his single caravel a week before. When Velazquez heard of Grijalva's return he bade him hurry from Matanzas to Santiago to report, at the same

time advising the rank and file of his expedition to remain where they were, or in Havana, if they desired to return to "the rich island," as they called that land from which they had brought such promising trophies, for it was, he announced, his intention to send forth another expedition at once: in fact this expedition was almost ready and Hernando Cortes had received his commission to captain it, possibly because he had invested heavily in the venture. On his own account Velazquez promised Grijalva's men he would provide them from estates at Jaruco (his own and the crown's) with everything they needed, and he instructed the local authorities at Havana to extend them courteous treatment. So some remained in the west awaiting further orders; others doubtless scattered to their holdings in and about the seven settlements of Cuba, always however with the intention of being on hand when that other expedition should set out, and as they talked to their stay-at-home neighbors there is no reason to believe the marvels that they had seen in Mexico diminished in the telling.

Grijalva made his report to Velazquez and his reward was his uncle's displeasure because he had not disregarded the terms of his commission and established a settlement,—a thing that commission forbade him to do. I presume that Grijalva's instructions in this particular reflected the provisions of Velazquez's own limited authority from the Jeronimite tribunal in Santo Domingo. Decidedly out of favor, "disdained," Oviedo says, by Velazquez, and "disliked" by his own men, Grijalva here passes from the history of Cuba.

Even before Velazquez knew the outcome of Gri-

jalva's expedition he had, as said, prepared another of which after some vacillation he named Hernando Cortes to be the captain. Of the Jeronimites he asked authority to establish settlements in the newly discovered region. Later by a chaplain of his named Benito Martinez he sent to Spain an account of Gríjalva's voyage and golden evidence of the truth of the story. He repeated his request that he be entrusted with the administration of the regions he had found.

On November 13th, 1518, acceding to his earlier petitions to this same effect, the crown gave Velazquez authority to explore at his own expense, and made him *adelantado* and governor not over Cuba, be it noted, for in Cuba he was confirmed as governor's lieutenant under Colon, and *repartidor* for the crown,—but over the islands and mainlands he had discovered and others he might thereafter find. Every favor here and hereafter was extended to him and to all under him. He was by this *cedula* fully empowered for exploration, conquest, and for government of conquered territory, and his honors were assured to his heir.

This is perhaps a proper point at which to consider for a moment what manner of men these were who now, in Cuba, stood about to undertake one of the most amazing adventures that ever fell to mortal lot. "The thirteenth century," says Hume, "saw the entrance of the Spanish people into the circle of cultured European nations. The civilization they had evolved out of the turmoil of warring races and alternate dominations had received its breath of life from the traditions of old Rome; but the abundant Afro-Semitic blood in the race and the element of far Eastern culture,—the

tastes and arts of Syria and Persia introduced by the Arabs,—had given to Spanish civilization features which distinguished it from that of any other western nation. The fatalism and indifference of life which is a characteristic of the Afro-Semitic races had made the Spaniards bold fighters and cruel conquerors. . . . The fifteenth century in Spain saw chivalry and knight-errantry raised by the overflowing imagination of the people to a cult." Fed by a flood of exuberant nonsense which was the literature of the time, "the nation," Hume continues, "formed a false standard of honor and conduct, and an exaggerated notion of its own qualities. Knights and ladies,—nay, . . . even working people,—full of these stories of knight-errantry, strove to dress and live up to the stilted romantic ideal. The evil seed fell upon fertile soil, for the Spaniard ever clutched at an excuse for deceiving himself into the belief that he was an individual apart; and thus at the opening of the modern era of the world he became a wool-gathering visionary, thirsting for vague adventures in far countries but loath to do steady work in his own." The Spaniard of the sixteenth century, in Cuba, was still much of all these things: Iberian in his pride of individuality; Roman in the spirit of his local institutions; Afro-Semitic in his love of pomp and play, and in his disregard of life, be it his own or others'; soon to be shamed by Don Quixote out of knight-errantry but wool-gathering yet after his *dorado*; pre-eminently child of a Spain that had been consolidated by means of religious bigotry, he was a militant crusading Christian zealous to obliterate all divisions of race and caste in the faith, and convinced by his previous experience with Jews and *moriscos* that for him to

profit in the course of their conversion by the bodies and by the property of the heathen was a policy entirely acceptable to the Most High. To such men Fate consigned the conquest of Mexico.

They were much the same sort of men who remained behind in Cuba. The colony was prosperous. Influx of settlers was continuous; they came in response to encouragement,—farmers were offered free passage and maintenance, free lands, the help of natives to erect their first homes, and exemption from taxation except the tithes “they owed to God”; they came not only from “the kingdoms of Castile” but from all the other less flourishing portions of the Indies,—from Darien, from La Española, and, notably, from Porto Rico. The native population was reinforced by red captives taken in many quarters: Juan Ponce, for instance, complained that Velazquez had “scandalized all the land of Bimini and Florida” by taking 300 head from there! Already black slaves constituted an element in the population.

The colony had a considerable commerce. Narvaez and Antonio Velazquez when in Spain as general *procuradores* sought favors for it. For the settlers they secured liberty to build and own ships for trading with La Española, Porto Rico, Jamaica and the continent; for local officials,—*justicias* of the towns not only of Cuba but of the other colonies as well,—they asked authority to clear ships from their respective ports without the intervention of the governor. They sought but failed to establish free trade between the colonies of the Indies not only in their own products but in merchandise originating in Spain for which Santiago especially was a distributing center. That harbor was

frequented by ships out of Seville with cargoes of rich silk; Spain excelled in its manufacture, and their clothing of handsome stuffs, their brilliant cloaks and taffeta bonnets, were a matter of men's pride, and to dress his wife in silk was evidence acceptable in law that a husband was a "principal" figure in his community. With the silk came footgear of all varieties and white wear, in which connection it is pleasant to note that soap was an article of such general necessary consumption in Cuba that it ranked among the very first taxed for revenue. For the Cubeños came trousers, shirts, cloaks, *alpargatas* (a sandal-like coarse shoe), cloths to be wrapped around the head less as an ornament possibly than as padding under burdens; colored belts with pouches, and hats,—these two articles being the insignia of chiefs!—combs, mirrors, knives, needles (trinkets to mitigate a savage's misery!), and for the women colored petticoats and beads. I am quoting from the ships' manifests of the time across whose pages I have seen passing dejected shades in ghostly red and yellow skirts of women "commended" to work the king's estates! Flour, oils, wine, vinegar, etc., were imported in quantities. Duty on imports from Spain was  $7\frac{1}{2}\%$  and Velazquez had been collecting it since January 1, 1515. On products of other islands imported into Cuba it would seem that no duty had been collected; the crown agreed that none should be demanded prior to 1517. He could do nothing further in this matter because beginning with 1517,—a happy period in the island's commercial development, when detailed news of new lands found further west over which the governor of Cuba was to have jurisdiction seemed to make the future of the colony, in commerce,

agriculture and industry of all sorts, brighter yet,—he had farmed the customs collections, after competitive bidding, to Pedro de Xeres at a little over 21,000 *pesos* gold per annum, for six years (1517-1522, inclusive). Duties were to remain payable at the rate of  $7\frac{1}{2}\%$ ; the crown could grant exemption and did so, frequently, as a mark of favor, which remissions however were taken into account in reckoning with the renter (*arrendador del almozarifazgo*). Regulations were dictated with a view to preventing smuggling; they were embodied in a formal contract in which also it was specified that the renter of this revenue as a creditor was to be preferred after the crown in collections made of dilatory debtors in the *fundicion*.

Strenuous collection of debts in the *fundicion* building itself was a source of irritation to its victims. On their behalf Narvaez in seeking to reform the custom argued that at least a man's miners and the expenses of mining should be paid before other creditors received attention. It seemed especially objectionable that the royal officials should make collections for private persons and they were ordered to discontinue the practice. Instead they altered it somewhat. Narvaez too petitioned for the establishment of another *fundicion* in addition to Santiago's, Trinidad being preferred, to accommodate the mining districts of the west; this, however, seems not to have been done. He did succeed, nevertheless, in obtaining for the Santiago establishment improved equipment which made it unnecessary to rework Cuban gold in Seville. The mines were productive. Their yield was reckoned at 100,000 *pesos* yearly; certainly during 1517 Velazquez sent 21,000 *pesos* to the crown, the royal fifth of the out-turn.

Although Diego de Velazquez had opened between the towns and from them to the mines trails travelled by two-legged black and red, as well as four-legged beasts of burden, the island now voiced a demand for roads and the crown agreed to pay one-fourth, annually until further notice, of the expenditures made for highways. The settlements were desirous of authority to tax themselves for local improvements. The crown ordered 500 pesos taken from fines (*penas de camara*) levied by local courts for petty offenses to be spent in Santiago to build a wharf. The town needed too a reservoir. The island's churches had acquired some ornaments, etc.; the crown checked the cost of them off against certain debts due to it and ordered leniency in collecting others.

Hog raising first, and the cattle industry next, became lucrative. The principal item of earliest exportation to Spain was hides; indeed little if anything else was sent for a century. With other colonies, notably with settlements at Darien, Cuba (especially Santiago and seemingly Trinidad) did a good trade in food stuffs, i. e., in *cazabe*. Land therefore began to acquire value even when not mineral-bearing and it was evident that the municipalities should have definite boundaries if the plague of law suits, fostered by an over-supply of lawyers, was to be checked (the crown endeavored to check it by curtailing their activities). The settlers had asked that the grants, *vecindades*, of land they held be doubled to them in area in the open country and in the towns.

It was at this time that the crown on request of the island granted Cuba authority to display, on banners and seals, her first coat of arms,—Our Lady of the

Assumption being the most prominent figure in the design.

Not all Cuba's russet and green hills, however, nor all her dank eastern forests, her pleasant central plains, nor the pineclad slopes of her western mountains, were of irresistible charm to those to whom they were first portioned out with unmeasured prodigality. The Spaniard's contempt for manual labor had been accentuated by his intercourse with Jews and *moriscos*, who in Spain practiced the handicrafts. "The growing religious influence of an intolerant priesthood," says Hume, "caused the old Christians to look (on such workers) with scorn and hatred. From contempt for the worker to contempt for the work was an easy transition and the Spanish old Christians, whose ancestors for ages had lived in a state of war, began to despise industries that were mainly carried on by suspected people, living apart in their own *aljama* quarters, oppressed by all sorts of restrictions and disabilities from which Spaniards of pure blood were free." The pure Spaniard come across to Cuba was still what he had always been,—an agriculturist only by necessity, a shepherd by choice at home and a cattleman here, if an occupation were forced upon him, but always a soldier by preference. These earliest settlers were therefore pre-eminently adventurers by spirit; and they were young. They were "solemnly poor" and to them hard metal only was real wealth. Many of them were of noble affiliation and therefore born to the conviction that to work even by proxy for the fortunes they expected of the New World was not only uninteresting but actually unworthy. The seven cities Velazquez had begun were, after all, but seven squalid hamlets, and not a

man of adventurous avaricious spirit in them but be-stirred himself when Melchor's tales travelled like a savannah fire through the island to share in the pillage of that strange opulent empire in the west on the threshold of which he found to his chagrin that he had paused: where gold and silver were used in base utensils, all unappreciated by weakling savages whom Providence, angered at their vices, was about to deliver with all their goods into the hands of Christian true-believers that their spiritual and temporal welfare might be accomplished by incorporation into the Spanish crown's possessions via conversion to the faith. With unre-buked pleasures and fabulous profits awaiting strong hands to take them, just a little further west, only the very poor in spirit were content to remain behind in Cuba as masters of diminishing *encomiendas* to grow crops and tend herds and wash river sands that in com-parison yielded meagerly of gold. Possession and ex-ploitation of "the fairest island human eyes have yet beheld" was a dull career for a hearty Spaniard before whom opened the conquest of the Aztec empire!

## CHAPTER VI

### THE EXODUS TO MEXICO (1518-1524)

*Qui nunc augusto componit membra sepulchro  
Prospera sors vivo munera magna dedit;  
Sed quando fuerat capturus maxima dona,  
Quas fecit, fortis eripuere manus.*

Charles V. to Velazquez.

Five days after Diego de Velazquez had been made *adelantado* over “the new lands” which his emissaries had discovered, Hernando Cortes, formerly Velazquez’s secretary and then with his favor *alcalde* of Santiago, made off (November 18, 1518) out of that harbor with the expedition which conquered Mexico. Cortes left behind him property and debts in charge of his brother-in-law Juan Suarez. In vain Velazquez, appreciating too late his captain’s character, tried to stop him. Fortune crowned Cortes’s audacity. With nine or ten good ships in the assembling and provisioning of which Velazquez had spent great part of his fortune, the conqueror of the Aztec empire sailed away, leaving his benefactor calling after him, impotently, from the shore. He proceeded along the south coast of Cuba; at Macaca, presumably in the Cape Cruz-Manzanilla region, and certainly at Trinidad where a hundred of Grijalva’s men joined him, again at the south shore port which had been Havana, and at Guaniguanico in the extreme west, Cortes called to take on recruits and to requisition supplies. He even seized a trading ship on the high

seas. In mid-February of 1519 he cleared from the west end of Cuba with five or six hundred good fighting men: in Cuba they said that the Indian servitors of these,—the pick of their kind and experienced in mining,—swelled the number of persons who left the island with this expedition to three thousand!

Having landed at Vera Cruz, Cortes who had no intention of confining himself to trading with the natives, was persuaded (not against his will!) to establish a settlement he called La Villa Rica de la Vera Cruz; he named its town council and *alcalde* and to them resigned his appointment under Velazquez, on strength of which he had brought these officials into existence, whereupon they obligingly named him *justicia mayor* and governor of New Spain (Mexico) for the crown. Velazquez's authority so repudiated and the good ships, in which Velazquez had a share, burned off shore to prevent any detrimental expression of regret for it, Cortes proceeded to take strong-handed possession of the *maxima dona* which the *prospera sors* that gave Velazquez much had nevertheless reserved for him.

Velazquez, so tricked, so cheated of the great prize, in his subsequent vain efforts to wrest it from Cortes ruined not only himself but also, for the time being, the island of Cuba, for he emptied the country of money and of men. Doubtless most of those who went to Mexico, went willingly; but it was said that he compelled others to go by threats and by taking their *encomiendas* from them.

As though it were to make the effect of the exodus more obvious, Cuba was at this period (middle of 1519) visited by a grievous pestilence. Small-pox and measles (leprosy, too, some insisted!) swept the country. In

some districts half the natives died; in others, a third of them. The island's out-turn of gold fell off accordingly, and the king was as displeased thereat "as he should be." It is not to be supposed that the Spaniards themselves were immune from these epidemics.

Velazquez was wearying the Spanish court with demands for justice. Cortes's counter-arguments in his own behalf were precisely those always acceptable and especially so at this distracted crisis in European affairs,—such, for instance, as that ship which in August of 1519 Alaminos the pilot took safe past Cuba to Spain "ballasted with gold." Putting into Marien for supplies he exhibited the quality of his cargo. Juan de Rojas, a cousin of Velazquez's resident in Havana, informed the governor who bade Gonzalo de Guzman capture the brigantine, but in vain he pursued it: Cortes's own luck accompanied it safe to Spain.

Seeking to obtain his own vengeance Velazquez summoned all his friends, from La Española and elsewhere, to help him reduce Cortes. To this end he raised a handsomer fleet than that with which the traitor had made away. The authorities in Santo Domingo were alarmed at the prospect of bloodshed between the contending parties and especially alarmed at the possible effect of such strife on the natives everywhere. Therefore the *audiencia* sent one of that court's first judges, the *Licenciado* Lucas Vazquez de Aylzon, to Cuba (January, 1520) to persuade Velazquez to desist. He found the *adelantado* with his second fleet all assembled in the west of Cuba, especially off Cape Corrientes. In vain Aylzon advised Velazquez to send forward a few ships only which if Cortes failed to listen to right and reason should leave the quarrel to the king's

justice and push discovery further; in vain he advised Velazquez to sell his great stock of provisions to Cortes and to use his extra ships to foment coasting trade among Cuban settlements and to further business between them and settlements elsewhere. Instead, early (March?) in 1520 Velazquez sent all to Mexico. Velazquez had intended to command the expedition in person; *Lic.* Ayllon claimed to have persuaded him that Cuba needed him, the numbers of settlers being thinned and the Cubeños restive, so that he confided it to Panfilo de Narvaez who with Guzman had in 1519 returned from his mission at court. Ayllon himself went with the fleet, "to keep the peace" in Mexico, he said.

Narvaez was still the "careless leader" las Casas had found him ten years before. The "thirteen very good ships" of this fleet, the "thousand" Spaniards, and meat in such quantities that the hog ranches of the island were obliterated, according to Cuba's complaints,—the horses, and the cannon, too,—everything that Velazquez had entrusted to him, all came after a stormy voyage to Cortes's hands like reinforcements, as did two more caravels and a brigantine which followed later. Narvaez, minus an eye lost in the skirmish in which Cortes obtained possession of him and his, was held a prisoner. His wife Maria de Valenzuela, meantime, in charge of his property at Bayamo, was administering it profitably.

"And in these days people left from many parts of Cuba to go to Cortes, because of the news of riches in that land, and he gave generously to all, and was beloved by all who served under him, and Diego de Velazquez was abhorred," as Oviedo records it.

At about this juncture too a hurricane blew up,—roaring wind and swirling rain in such a passion as those who have seen tropical Nature indulge in do not forget: trees were broken and uprooted, rivers burst from their beds and the seas ignored their boundaries. Houses were levelled, their materials scattered like straws indeed; crops were wiped from the fields, and “what cattle had remained” were laid dead on the ranges.

The admiral, Diego Colon, Velazquez's superior in Santo Domingo, had certainly not been rendered more friendly toward him by the independence he had shown in prosperity; it was but to be expected that now he should make the most of the *adelantado*'s manifold misfortunes. He appointed the *Licenciado* Alonso de Zuazo to investigate Velazquez's conduct in office and to supersede him as governor's lieutenant in Cuba. The city council of Santiago received Zuazo on January 18th, 1521.

That it did receive him, and governors thereafter, is an interesting detail. Panfilo de Narvaez as general *procurador* for the island had in 1518 requested that, in order that the settlements of Cuba might be better governed, he said, the crown should make the office of *regidor* (councilman) lifehold. Agreeing, on December 12 of that same year Charles named Diego de Samano and Gonzalo de Guzman, for Santiago; Bernaldino Yniguez and Alonso Benbrilla, for Trinidad; Panfilo de Narvaez and Francisco Santa Cruz for San Salvador de Bayamo, to be *regidores perpetuos*. Diego de Caballero and Fernando de Medina, appointed in 1519, would seem to have been the first so named for Sancti Spiritus, and Rodrigo Cañon and Sancho de

Urrutia for Santa Maria del Puerto de Principe. I take it that for a while the governor of the colony continued to appoint, in addition to these "perpetual" councilmen, enough others to complete a determined number in each municipality; their tenure of the office was, of course, terminable. The royal officials immediately (March 18, 1521, for example) expressed a desire to be councilmen, to be present at all deliberations of matters touching the island's welfare; they declared that it was advisable "since *justicia* is the admiral's," and the crown agreed. The king made them *regidores perpetuos* of Santiago in *cedulas* entirely apart from those appointing them treasurer, accountant and factor respectively, and it became customary so to honor incumbents in these offices.

Cristobal de Cuellar was dead; he had made Velazquez his residuary legatee. Pedro Nuñez de Guzman who succeeded him as treasurer, being an *encomendero* in La Española had been relieved of his Indians there while he was serving the crown in wars against the Caribs in Porto Rico (law suits in consequence were pending!) and he had seen campaigning in Flanders too before he settled down in Cuba, now, to become shortly an affluent colonist. Ortúño de Insunso was dead. Bernaldino de Velazquez, nephew of the governor and already an established resident in Santiago, succeeded him as factor. Amador de Lares was dead; Andres de Duero (a merchant-trader in whose company Cortes made money) served the office pro tem but royal appointment gave it to Pedro de Paz, a former *vecino* of La Española. In 1519 the crown had commissioned Pedro de Isasaga to audit the accounts of the royal officials in the Indies; at the end of February, 1521,

Isasaga turned his work in Porto Rico over to another and came on to Cuba. He departed in May, 1522. Presumably his visit set collections and accounts with the crown in order, though subsequent auditors expressed regret to find little permanent evidence of any such effect.

It is not likely that Narvaez, in asking in 1518 that *regidores perpetuos* be appointed, was moved primarily by any unselfish desire to see Cuba well governed. It is far more likely that the intention was to strengthen a clique by making its members irremovable from the town councils. Certainly these became close and selfish oligarchies, just as they had done in Spain. Unfortunately the quantity and the continuity of the documents I have seen for this troubled year or so in Cuba's history are unsatisfactory; so, comparatively, scarce and scattered are the papers I have found relating to Zuazo's brief administration I am inclined to write after every assertion I may make concerning it, "S. E. O.," *salvo error u omision*. There is indication that Velazquez and his friends in the Santiago council immediately made trouble for the second governor of Cuba; there is also evidence that they found him amenable to Velazquez's influence as *repartidor* of *encomiendas*. The day after the council received him Velazquez entered protest against Zuazo's in the least infringing on his authority as warden of the fort at Baracoa (which probably no longer existed) or as *repartidor* of the natives of the island. In evidence that this office was still solely Velazquez's was presented his royal appointment thereto dated May 13, 1513, and confirmed November 13, 1518. The office of *repartidor* carried more effective power with it than that of governor and

this Velazquez meant to retain. Within a month the royal officials complained to the crown that Zuazo had named lieutenants who in advance of them boarded arriving vessels, which was "not convenient"; the crown disapproved Zuazo's action in this, reprimanding Colon severely,—and so made its debut a cause for quarrel which stood other royal officials and other governors in good stead for a hundred years thereafter!

Before February, 1522, Don Diego Colon himself and two judges of the Santo Domingo *audiencia* (*Lic.* Marcelo and *Lic.* Juan Ortiz de Matienzo) had arrived in Santiago. One *cedula* says they came to punish certain delinquencies. The admiral conducted a secret investigation into Velazquez's administration (*pesquisa secreta*), findings in which the crown demanded to see in order to be informed of what really was transpiring. Part of the admiral's and *oidores'* (judges') business concerned the bankruptcy of Pedro de Xeres, renter of the customs.

Velazquez still insisted that no man had authority to interfere with him as royally appointed *repartidor* of the natives, and surely the wording of his commission justified him, but Colon and the judges harked back to that provision in it according to which they (named therein as they were by name) might furnish the *repartidor* with written signed advice how to use the office, and now they handed him that advice embodied in certain "instructions" he was ordered to follow in making *encomiendas*. These "instructions" were cried "in high and intelligible voice by Miguel de Medina, crier of the said city (of Santiago) from before the doors of the chief church of the said city which is on the public *plaza*," Velazquez being among the listeners. They

seem to have become the law in the matter of *repartimiento*, but just as there was nothing in Velazquez's commission to compel him to take the advice of the admiral and the judges even when so forcefully delivered, so merely that they were the law in Cuba need not be taken as conclusive evidence that these "instructions" were enforced. There is much to indicate that they were not observed.

Velazquez, a rich man still despite the fact that his resources had been reduced by the cost of equipping two armadas, seems to have been busy during Zuazo's intrusion in raising a third. By the end of 1522 he was heavily in debt to the crown who in view of his services ordered leniency in collections from him. The historian Herrera says that Velazquez sailed from Cuba in personal command of this third expedition but was persuaded to turn back without landing upon that territory over which he was *adelantado* in name only. This may have been the case, for certainly he was absent from Santiago at various times. Again, however, he may be glimpsed occupying himself with Cuba's affairs. For instance, certain very interesting, original documents I have seen, bearing Velazquez's own signature, show that in the summer of 1523 certain natives he describes as *indios cayos* (key Indians), had killed Spaniards, which moved his "spirit and heart to compassion and pain." They also destroyed property, among other being an estate belonging to Rodrigo de Tamayo, whom Velazquez commissioned to make war against them. His health permitting, Velazquez had a mind to go to Bayamo personally to assist.

Gonzalo de Guzman, *procurador*, who returned to Cuba with Narvaez in 1519, must have recrossed the

seas immediately, for in August, 1520, he was at court again and less active as the island's advocate than as the very special representative of the governor versus his enemies especially, at this crisis, Colon. For the settlers, however, Guzman secured a confirmation of titles to real estate theretofore issued by governors of Cuba (presumably meaning particularly Velazquez) or by the town councils, which bodies had assumed (with precedent) the prerogative of granting lands. He succeeded, too, in getting the crown to reduce the royal share of gold mined from a fifth to a tenth: the moving argument was that pestilence had reduced the number of Cubeño miners. July 10, 1521, Velazquez made out a power of attorney to his cousin Manuel de Rojas authorizing him to represent him at court with respect to Mexico. On December 15, 1521, the officials of Seville were instructed to facilitate Guzman's return to Cuba in all haste: he was on the crown's business. On December 23 the crown ordered Velazquez restored completely to his office of governor's lieutenant in Cuba. If by any chance he were absent from Santiago when the *cedula* to this effect arrived there Gonzalo de Guzman was to be received as such in his stead, and presumably Guzman hurried these provisions to Cuba.

There is some evidence that after Zuazo Gonzalo Dovalle acted as governor of Cuba, though on what authority or for how long are points I have not been able to clear up.

The *Lic.* Zuazo who was thus summarily ousted from office had been despatched to La Española in the fall of 1516 with a royal commission bestowing upon him very extensive civil and criminal jurisdiction within that island. In due course another judge arrived to in-

vestigate his administration (i. e., a *tomarle residencia*), and it was while this investigation was in progress that Diego Colon sent Zuazo to Cuba to make a similar examination into Velazquez's conduct in his office and to succeed him as governor's lieutenant there. Although in 1517 the crown had been of a renewed mind to *residenciar* (i. e., investigate) Velazquez, and provided the Jeronimites in Santo Domingo with blank appointment of a judge to undertake the task, which commission they seem not to have used, he nevertheless resented that Diego Colon should have undertaken the business. On September 10, 1521, he declared Zuazo's commission null and void on the ground that while his own *residencia* was unfinished he was ineligible to the office Colon proffered and, moreover, to name *jueces* (judges) *de residencia* was a crown prerogative. Therefore all that Zuazo had done in Cuba as *juez de residencia*, since to be such he had no legal authority, and as governor's lieutenant, since he was not eligible to that office, was to be entirely disregarded. The crown ordered all matters restored to precisely the status in which Zuazo had found them upon assuming office.

Zuazo continued to reside in Santiago until early in January, 1524, when he sailed for Mexico as the special emissary of Francisco de Garay. Garay, governor of Jamaica, had been made governor and captain-general over Panuco, and in June, 1523, he left Jamaica with a handsome armada and a brilliant company, his objective being his new jurisdiction. He put in at Xagua (Cienfuegos), Cuba, en route and there learned that Cortes had already taken possession of Panuco. He wrote to Velazquez and to Zuazo, at Santiago, and Zuazo, considered fitted to the task because he was a

lawyer, agreed to represent Garay in a conference with Cortes in hopes to prevent a conflict between them. On this mission Zuazo sailed, as said, from Santiago in January, 1524; he was wrecked on the way and endured heart-breaking hardships, but eventually he did reach Mexico and rose to enviable position there under Cortes, from which estate, on the strength of what he said were false charges, he was fetched a prisoner in chains to Cuba to answer in a second *residencia* for his administration in this island, in the course of which investigation, he complained, he endured affronts and ill treatment. He had already been cleared, by Colon, in one *residencia*. When, after he had returned to La Española, still another investigation into the same matter was ordered, he protested that it was too much, and the crown agreeing, the third *residencia* was dropped (1526). Zuazo appears to have resumed his seat on the *audiencia's* bench at Santo Domingo and to have owned a sugar plantation in that island when he died there in 1539. Garay, meanwhile, having further depleted Cuba's population by recruiting, pressed on to Mexico only to meet misfortune there.

His offices can have been but irritating honors to Velazquez now, for, on October 22, 1522, Charles had made Cortes his governor over Mexico and commanded Velazquez neither to go nor to send any expedition to trouble further the brilliant Marquis del Valle, once his very humble servant but now ennobled far above him by success. This royal mandate was proclaimed by crier in the streets of Santiago in May, 1523, "and this was the conclusion of the ruin of Diego de Velazquez."

It would seem that he was preparing to go to Spain to enter protest in his own behalf when, on June 11th or

12th, of 1524, he received an imperative summons to a Higher Court than Spain's. He asked to be buried by the altar steps in the cathedral of Santiago to which he left a bequest in his will. His king composed him an epitaph, moved to Latin poetry by consideration of his faithful and intelligent service. "*Honoris cupidus, pecuniae aliquanto cupidior,*" wrote another Latin quill at court, and so the memory of his short-comings and his misfortunes lived after him, rather than any recollection of his good traits. Certainly he was an able governor,—gratitude and impartiality are not to be expected of him for they were not characteristic of his kind nor of his time; only the madness out of Mexico destroyed him. Cuba forgot not only the date of his demise, long in controversy, but even the site of his interment. In making excavations in the cathedral on November 26, 1810, a stone said to be his memorial tablet was found and what are cherished as defaced pieces of it I have seen in the museum of Santiago. No monument exists in all the island, I think, to the memory of its conquering, colonizing first governor.

His death closed what may, perhaps, be considered the first period of the colony's history. Within his lifetime Spaniards had found, and possessed themselves of Cuba and Cubeños; even before he died they had begun to abandon both to a long decline. The star of empire had taken its way westward and this island had become but a way-port between Spain and the American continents.



## FOREWORD TO BOOK II

Principal sources for statements herein made relative to the history of Cuba from 1524 to 1550 are the *cedularios*,—139-1-6, 139-1-7, and 79-4-1 continuing into 79-4-2. A serious hiatus occurs between the last *cedulas* preserved in 139-1-7 and the first in 79-4-1; apparently a volume is missing. I could not find it at Seville. Equal to the *cedularios* in importance if not in bulk are documents which originated in the island, preserved in 54-1-15; 54-1-32; 54-1-34; 54-2-2. Other packages of documents in the Archives in examination of which data have been found are: 1-1-2/16; 1-2-1/21; 1-2-2/18; 1-2-8/28; 1-4-5/10; 2-1-1/20; 2-1-1/25; 2-1-2/21; 2-1-2/26; 2-1-3/22; 2-2-5/5; 2-4-1/9; 2-5-1/14; 2-5-1/22; 2-5-2/10; 2-5-3; 2-6-1; 2-6-2; 2-6-6; 46-4-1/33; 47-1-19; 47-1-1/11; 47-1-2/29; 47-1-4; 47-1-19; 47-2-8/3; 47-2-23/18; 47-2-25/20; 47-2-26/21; 47-2-27/22; 47-2-28/23; 47-2-31/26; 47-2-32/27; 50-1-31/7; 51-5-2/12; 51-5-5/15; 51-5-6/16; 51-5-7/17; 51-5-8/18; 53-1-7; 53-1-9; 53-1-10; 53-3-60/2; 53-4-1; 53-4-9; 53-6-4; 53-6-7; 53-6-8; 54-1-9; 54-1-11; 54-3-4; 54-3-6; 54-3-15; 54-3-19; 58-3-7; 78-2-1; 85-3-1; 87-6-1; 87-6-2; 139-1-8; 139-1-9; 139-1-10; 139-7-5; 139-7-14; 140-3-1; 140-3-9; 140-7-31; 141-7-1; 143-3-11; 143-3-12; 144-1-9; 144-1-10; 144-1-11; 144-1-12; 144-1-14; 144-1-15; 145-1-9; 147-2-11; 147-2-12; 148-1-13; 148-2-3; 148-2-4; 148-2-5; 148-2-6; 154-1-8; 155-4-16. In

some of these ninety-four packages there are many documents of value, in others few, while in others still only casual and unimportant mention of Cuban affairs will be found, but in all there is reference to the island, no matter what investigation of the labels may show the packages to be branded to contain.

What printed books have been used are invariably mentioned in the text.

I. A. W.

## BOOK II

### CHAPTER VII

#### THE RISE OF LOCAL PATRIOTISM (1524-1528)

"The original Iberian tradition,—a powerful tendency . . . to assert individual liberty and localize patriotism."—HUME, *The Spanish People*.

Through very many years following Velazquez's death, Cuba continued in a long decline. Her affairs fell into the hands of her own colonists. At first the situation seemed to hold promise of excellent things. Although the whole drift of Spanish political life in the sixteenth century was toward the strengthening of the power of the crown, there now appeared in Cuba a sporadic tendency in the opposite direction, and like a tremor from convulsions in Spain itself a demand for representative government stirred through the island and out of the loyalest of Spaniards were evolved the first Cubans,—even more loyal! Foremost among them was Manuel de Rojas, Velazquez's cousin who succeeded him as governor.

Rojas was a *vecino* of Bayamo and he had an *encomienda* there. He was known at court where he had recently represented Diego de Velazquez near the king. The *audiencia* of Santo Domingo seems formally to have appointed Rojas to be governor's lieutenant of Cuba, Colon in whom the power to do so vested being

absent in Spain at the time; certainly he filled the office until March, 1525, and on October 20th, 1524, the *audiencia* exceeded its authority in naming him also *repartidor* of Cubeños, an office bestowal of which lay with the king alone. Rojas also drew some pay as *alcalde* of Baracoa.

Manuel de Rojas was the first (unless Velazquez himself be reckoned a member) of a very notable family, distinguished for its merits in Spain and in all the Americas as well; in him now it began to assume a dominance in Cuba's affairs which it held through many a generation thereafter in the name of Rojas, Ynestrosa, Cepero, Soto, etc., etc., to variations through marriage and intermarriage which are problems for the genealogist, not the historian. The family's preëminence was deserved, for its members were remarkable for prudence, fair-mindedness and industry. As Cubans,—for such they became, and the very earliest of their kind, by thorough adoption first and later by birth,—they made the island their own, and the grateful land's response to them was an immediate and considerable prosperity. They were not alone in their good work; associated with them old records name especially Alonso Sanchez del Corral of Sancti Spiritus; Porcallo de Figueroa of Camaguey, and two Paradas and Rodrigo Tamayo of Bayamo.

Rich men of the colony located at Santiago were Gonzalo de Guzman; Nuñez de Guzman, the treasurer (these two were brothers-in-law); the accountant Pero de Paz; Andres Duero and Diego de Soto. Secure in title to lands they had, they held natives *encomendados*, and not only washed for gold in the rivers and mined the bald hills where it was found in veins, but they bred

horned cattle now as well as hogs, cultivated fields and sold crops and meat and horses and mules to the conquest-crazed expeditionaries who made Cuba a way-station en route to the continent. Their enemies alleged that they constituted a "trust" in restraint of trade. In their ships, thanks to those privileges Narvaez had secured for the colony when he was *procurador* at court, they followed up traffic with the growing settlements in Mexico, in Venezuela, Honduras and on the isthmus of Darien, and with Porto Rico, La Española and Jamaica. Not only were they well acquainted with each other and all their business interests identical, but they were amazingly inter-related. "One being scratched, all bled." In every one of the six other settlements they had their kin, their agents and their emulators. Spaniards by birth, these colonists had nevertheless become in twelve years of hardship more closely identified with Cuba than they were with the land of their nativity: "local patriotism" had come into existence.

The interests of men like these had been neglected in Spain during Velazquez's quarrels with Cortes; there turmoil and bloodshed of social revolution were ravaging the peninsula at the commencement of the reign of the Fleming, Charles V. "of Germany." At home in the island every calamity had visited them,—"loss, pestilence, storm and departing armadas, followed one after another, . . . events unimaginable, entirely outside the scope of human foresight . . . miseries and calamities," as the lessee of the collection of Cuba's customs exclaimed when the general misfortune which oppressed Cuba at this date overwhelmed him and his bondsmen in failure and its aftermath of reclamation for

debt. Gonzalo de Guzman, *procurador* at court for Velazquez against Cortes and Colon, himself seeking appointments in Yucatan and Cozumel, was not representative of those other colonists (though they contributed to pay his expenses), who because they had already had enough of adventure or because they had never owned a stomach for hardship and slaughter or because they were endowed with common sense to appreciate what they had safely in hand, were interested first in Cuba and only secondarily in "the new lands."

They seem to have been better represented near the king in 1522 and 1523 by Juan Mosquera who secured for them free trade with neighboring islands and the mainland, the contract with Pedro de Xeres, renter of the collection of customs, having expired thereby removing an obstacle to that concession. The household belongings of immigrating families were now exempt from all duty. Mosquera voiced again the colony's demand for roads, and action was taken looking to the levying of a considerable tax to raise funds for public works. At his instance the crown ordered *penas de camara* (fines for minor offences) to a total of 250,000 *maravedis* to be expended on such improvements, each municipality to dispose of its own share; later when this concession was about to expire it was extended five years from date of original termination, the money to be spent on roads and town halls, each jurisdiction disposing of its own funds. Further, on his representations, it was now ordered that the *fundicion* should open for business four days every two months, instead of once a year (*refundicion* every five months). This was considered a measure of financial relief. It will be recalled

that the king had previously ordered his officials to cease to collect in the *fundicion* payment of other accounts than his; they obeyed by attending to the matter (the governor himself acting with them!) not inside the *fundicion* itself but in an anteroom at its very door. Seated there on behalf of their creditors, the four most formidable officers in the island had constituted "a grievance and a weariness" to the mine-owners of the colony. Mosquera got from the crown a ruling that what gold remained to a man after he had settled with the authorities inside the *fundicion* was his own; creditors assembled outside were referred to the courts for justice. To Mosquera's activities at this time was due the first official action taken (February 13, 1523) toward establishing the sugar industry in Cuba. That industry was already favored and prosperous in La Española, and in imitation of measures taken there the crown now called on the royal officials of Cuba for a list of persons here who commanded natural facilities,—the lands and the water necessary for plantations,—with a view to distributing among them four thousand *castellanos* as a loan. I have seen no evidence that the money was advanced nor any to indicate that any serious attempt was made at this time to foster the manufacture of sugar.

Charles, meanwhile, had on May 20th, 1524, made the *Licenciatus* Juan Altamirano governor's lieutenant of Cuba, Colon concurring, for a term of two years, and *juez de residencia* to investigate Velazquez. This was usual procedure. Arrived in Santiago, Altamirano's appointment was proclaimed by crier on March 14th, 1525, and he took possession of his offices. Still following the accustomed routine, he then invited all who had

complaints to make against Velazquez to formulate them without fear: the invitation was published in all the settlements. He summoned a cloud of witnesses and to them put a long series of questions based on all the adverse reports that had accumulated through years, especially as these were listed in a document left at court by Juan Mosquera; this *interrogatorio* was calculated to draw out evidence of misconduct on the part of the governor and of all who had held offices on his authority. The royal officials were subjected to similar examination. For months notaries earned wages setting down testimony which, read at almost four centuries' distance, seems burdened with ludicrous trivialities. Velazquez, asleep under the cathedral's flags, was not awakened by notifications or summons read to its congregations and posted upon its doors, by charges that he had accepted gifts (of scarlet cloth and velvet bonnets, of a chestnut horse and a gray mule), levied taxes for public works and public festivities without due authority from the crown so to do, gambled "for cash," as Manuel de Rojas confessed, "with other honorable citizens," tolerated blasphemies, failed to pay for provisions his armadas to Mexico took, administered justice without nice regard for law, "being no lawyer," distributed Cubeños with partiality to his friends, and permitted these natives to be taken away from the island. Nor was he disturbed by announcement of fines imposed in consequence of these charges, much as adverse sentences concerned his heirs among whom was Gonzalo de Guzman. Velazquez's spirit, however, persisted above ground,—less domitable than the flesh!—and provided the *Licenciatus Altamirano* with more trouble than he could cope.

He found it animating the town councils, strongholds of the same "local patriotism" resentful of outside interference which had made Zuazo uncomfortable. Altamirano encountered it especially in the most important council of all, that of Santiago, where, he alleged, Velazquez foreseeing a *residencia* had cleverly entrenched, in part behind royal lifehold appointments which could not be cancelled, the two Guzmans, Paz, Duero and Soto, all his fast good friends, in a position to defend themselves, each other, him and all their faction. Altamirano found it necessary to suspend them from office, their duties to be discharged temporarily by two persons they might select against whom no accusations existed such as he formulated against them of expending funds without authorization.

Not content merely to defend, these colonists even assumed the aggressive and at this time, doubtless influenced by recent tragic events in Spain where towns and guilds had been fighting for privileges till hope of representative government was lost in the rout of Villalar, they acquired for the municipal councils confirmation of independence to which these bodies had not before been justly entitled. Through the last six years of Velazquez's life the councils seem to have widened their jurisdiction. Possibly the governor, interested in Mexico, made no attempt to defend the prerogatives of his office. It is even conceivable that he gladly delegated his authority to lieutenants and *alcaldes* who in relieving him of the task of attending to Cuba's affairs created important precedents and established customs. Certainly he even permitted *alcaldes ordinarios* to encroach upon his once so highly prized privileges as *repartidor* of Cubeños.

Formerly the governor had appointed all *alcaldes* and they presided in his absence and further absence of his lieutenant over the councils which had been originally wholly his appointment but were now so only in such part as the crown failed to fill by way of *regidores perpetuos*. Now the councils, part of whose membership was irremovable (save by death or resignation), elected the *alcaldes* who presided apparently without a vote, and now, too, the *cabildo* asserted what seems to have been a theretofore disregarded fact,—that the governor and his lieutenant had no right to attend its sessions. The *audiencia* of Santo Domingo ordered Altamirano not to enter council meetings. He protested, citing that all his predecessors had done so, and he forbade the *justicia* and *regidores* to assemble without him. Nevertheless the crown sustained the *audiencia's* ruling, evidently because it upheld a preceding *cedula* in the same sense which had been ignored by Velazquez and his immediate successors. Presently, citing specifically this instance of their defence of the *cabildo's* liberties, the *regidores* petitioned to be paid salaries because their strenuous public duties interfered with profitable prosecution of their private business. I have not found that any salary was ever (within the period covered by this work) assigned to the office of *regidor* though later it does become evident that by way of percentages, fees, etc., the post was made profitable to its occupant.

In October, 1525, Rodrigo Duran representing Santiago and the rest of Cuba appeared before the *audiencia* in Santo Domingo to enter charges against Altamirano. Complaints had reached the crown also who by December 1st had decided that Gonzalo de

Guzman should take the *licenciatus's residencia* and succeed him as governor's lieutenant in Cuba. The authorities in Santo Domingo were advised to this effect. The crown issued Guzman's commission as *juez de residencia*, Colon having made him governor's lieutenant; it was forwarded to him through the *audiencia*. He was also made *repartidor* of Cubeños with the same powers Velazquez had had. Assuming office on April 25, 1526, Guzman proceeded to put Altamirano through the usual routine, irritating investigation, beginning it on August 1, 1526; many impassioned charges were made against him but,—which explains why Altamirano himself had requested a *residencia*,—on appeal from Guzman's light sentences they were finally adjudged to be without foundation in any real culpability and, as the crown later remarked with some indignation, Cuba's *vecinos* were discovered to have raised against the *licenciatus* a disturbance by no means justified. From Cuba Altamirano went to Mexico.

The conceit of the councils and of all the colonists of Cuba cannot have failed to augment mightily because of the selection for the highest offices in the land, of a simple *regidor*, *vecino* of Santiago. Guzman very soon requested a salary for his services; the crown bade the vireine pay him such, but there is evidence that she did not do so. Guzman was instructed to appoint but one lieutenant, as Velazquez had at first done, to reside in distant Havana, instead of several elsewhere as well, as it seems the *adelantado* did toward the end of his governorship; this was a measure to insure free scope for the activities of *alcaldes ordinarios* as judges of first instance. When ordered to observe the law which for-

bade him to attend sessions of the council of Santiago, Guzman protested and secured for himself (but not for governor's lieutenants in general) permission to be present at its meetings, although there was some delay in delivery of this *cedula* and probably also in its enforcement.

At this same period the crown made a couple of dozen additional appointments to offices of *regidores perpetuos* in the seven town councils of Cuba. What members may yet have held such posts by the governor's grace were surely now crowded out by those persons the crown preferred.

Rapidly as the town councils had achieved importance, now the district *procuradores* developed as a check not only upon them but upon all existing functionaries. Exercising a right inherited from Rome, formally recognized by the Spanish crown (in 1519 and again in 1528) as appertaining to the cities and settlements of the Indies, the seven wide municipalities which Velazquez created had been naming their advocates (*procuradores*), electing them at this time out of the councils. These advocates were the municipalities' champions, "to attend to their affairs and defend them." At this period their most obvious service was rendered when they met together yearly during the *fundicion* at Santiago, to discuss their districts' needs and formulate petitions to the crown which were sent as a letter or presented in person by whatever emissary (not necessarily one of themselves) the *procuradores* chose, empowered and paid, for the purpose. To the meeting of *procuradores* held in Santiago in the spring (February 24th to March 17th) of 1528 Manuel de Rojas representing Bayamo presented protests and

proposals which were in essence the expression of popular resentment of a growing tendency toward oligarchy in the colony's administration,—against an overlordship (*señorio*) of the councils with respect to other "honorable residents," who objected, they said, to being considered councils' vassals.

His presentation of these proposals did not meet with the unanimous approval of the other *procuradores*; in fact at one point Juan Bono de Quexo representing Havana bolted the assembly in protest against them, but they nevertheless prevailed in the communication drawn for the king under date of March 17th. Therein it was suggested that governors of the colony be appointed by the crown for three year terms from among the settlers themselves; that the office of *regidor* be no longer lifehold; but, instead, along with those of *alcalde* and *procurador*, be made elective, the colonists to choose incumbents for yearly terms; and that the latter advocates be given ample powers and required to continue to meet annually. It may have been true, as Hume says, that in April, 1521, "the hope of representative government in Castile" died for two hundred and ninety years to come, but in Cuba that result of Spain's ill-directed resentment of Flemish Charles was not immediately evident. The revelation came later.

Charles himself had learned much of Spanish character since, from Flanders, he watched sweep the peninsula that conflagration which was war of the communes in one portion and the even more sharply defined social conflict of the *germania* in another. Therefore he adopted in part the suggestions now made by the *procuradores* of Cuba for changes in their local government. While the governor continued to be

Admiral Colon's lieutenant and appointee and *regidores* were still named for life, and tenure of the offices of treasurer, accountant and factor was not, as Rojas had asked, made incompatible with membership in the town council, nevertheless the hold these had on the *alcaldes* was loosened, in the following peculiar manner: it was ordered that on a day, each year, which the governor should select (and it appears he chose New Year's), the *cabildo* in meeting should nominate two candidates for the *alcaldia* from among its members, the governor and his lieutenant also nominating one and the *regidores* two more; the five names were to be put "into a pot" and a passing child called in to draw forth two, the first drawn to be first *alcalde* for a year to come, and the other to be his second. More important than this, however, on the same date (November 6, 1528) it was provided that thereafter on a day the governor should select (again, it was New Year's) all the people should meet together at the town hall and by popular vote choose their own *procurador* for the twelve months to follow. His powers were large. He could institute suits and appeal them from the *audiencia* at Santo Domingo to the council for the Indies which Charles had organized in Spain to handle his New World affairs, and he could lay complaints before the crown against the city council, governor or royal officials without informing them of the nature of his accusations.

Other petitioners were now required to bring with them a report from local authorities upon their demands for privileges to undertake discoveries, for land grants, and the like, because the king had found it unwise to heed or act on unsupported reports of individuals since

some sacrificed truth to their own ends. Governor Guzman later attempted to interpret this requirement in a manner to enable him to obtain information as to the complaints *procuradores* and royal officials sent to Spain against him, but the crown ordered him to respect the privacy of their communications.

This much, then, Manuel de Rojas had gained: "all the people" had a voice in the monarch's ear and against subsequent protests of officials whom they annoyed, the crown maintained the independence of Cuba's *procuradores*.

Rojas' achievement in this respect, and the fact that Gonzalo Guzman, a colonist, was governor as other colonists had been before him, plus the further detail that the royal officials and other *regidores* were also colonists, makes it evident that the settlers at this period exercised dominant influence in the island's affairs. "Local patriotism" was ascendant. The first Cubans were in the making and already they possessed an importance in their own political administration which they defended thereafter by every means, fair and foul, against outsiders regardless of their category. Let the reader observe, however, that this defence at no time took on any taint of disloyalty to the crown even when it became resistance to the crown's direct representatives. Hume has identified the mainspring of a Spaniard's action to be passionate aspiration to individual distinction through sacrifice; never was his meaning better exemplified than in Cubans who, thus early, showed that their particular sacrifice was allegiance to the crown,—an almost abject allegiance which nevertheless was entirely compatible with "local patriotism" and also with "the original Iberian tradi-

tion" of individual liberty. There is a point of view in this which may not be dismissed as a contradiction; it must be borne steadily in mind if the development of the island's history is to be comprehended by minds not Spanish in their conformations.

## CHAPTER VIII

### GONZALO DE GUZMAN AND JUAN DE VADILLO (1526-1532)

*"Gonzalo de Guzman esta tan aposesionado asi de haciendas como de indios, que aunque otra cosa no ubiese sino estar el tan señor poderoso, era causa bastante para que Vuestra Magestad con toda brevedad mandase proveer como el dicho Gonzalo de Guzman no turiese los dichos cargos (de teniente de gobernador y repartidor de indios) pues ha cinco años que los tiene sin haber hecho residencia, e crea Vuestra Majestad que proveyendo lo susodicho los vecinos desta ysla salen de mucha sujecion que con el han tenido e tienen. . . ." Town council of Santiago, Doc. Ined., 2nd Series, Vol. II., p. 152.*

Gonzalo de Guzman had assumed the office of governor's lieutenant in Cuba on August 1, 1526; his first administration terminated on November 6, 1531, with the arrival of *Lic.* Juan Vadillo to take his *residencia*. That investigation being concluded on March 1, 1532, Vadillo delivered the governorship again to Manuel de Rojas. Guzman once more succeeded Rojas on March 28, 1535. On May 20, 1537, he resigned the verge to the town council of Santiago. On May 4 following Hernando de Soto was made *adelantado* of Florida and governor of Cuba, the first to hold that title and the office by royal appointment. These years, even from Velazquez's death in 1524, through de Soto's administration (1538-43) are the second era of Cuba's history, a time of stagnation ebullient with bitter personal quarrels. It corresponds to that period in Spain's history when the peninsula, fused into nationality by

the statesmanship of "the Catholic kings" having exhausted in civil war its resentment of Charles V.'s foreign nationality, next, so exhausted, expended itself still further in paying his bills for foreign campaigns out of which Spain got nothing more tangible than the glory of them, and the draining responsibilities they involved.

Now in Cuba "the original Iberian tradition" ran amuck and by envy and consequent dissension the colony was distracted between two factions: the governor and the bishop were one party to prolonged conflict with another centering in the royal officials who constituted a majority of the town council and therefore controlled and used it. Their differences have been preserved, in documents, with superabundance of details. Meanwhile, between a determination to ameliorate the wretched condition of the natives, a determination which the records credit to Charles himself, and the equally set determination of the colonists to wring the last corpuscle of service out of the Cubanos, these,—a simple, humble people,—passed, dancing, starving, fighting, out of existence. In this era black slavery struck its roots deeper. The importance of the *procuradores* waned and flickered out. Gold mining continued and excellent copper deposits were discovered. The sugar industry again stirred, but its hour was not to come for sixty years. Mexico continued to drain the island of men and Peru, pouring the wealth of the Incas at the feet of Pizarro, drew from the country even old settlers who had resisted every other lure. Discovery of the Bahama channel routed navigation (and so business between the continents and Spain) along the north coast of Cuba, establishing Havana's importance

and attracting population from the south coast ports, especially of Trinidad. Florida now showed for the first time above Cuba's horizon and when the brilliant pageant of de Soto's expedition for its conquest had passed, the tragedy of that disaster seemed to mark the close of an era in this island's history. When, however, the new era which followed (after descent into the slough of despond) is analyzed true potent causes of change are found to be, first, definite establishment of trade routes and, second, the influence of French aggressive policies.

The curious personal character of the documents of this period makes the actors in its tragedies and comedies seem very real to one who has had to read them in their wearying prolixity. Bernaldino Velazquez, factor, was dead. Andres Duero filled the position until the arrival of the crown's appointee, Hernando de Castro, who seems to have been engaged in trade with the Indies as early as 1520. He came animated by an interest in brazil wood, and early reported his conviction that wheat would grow in Cuba (flour was a heavy importation); seed wheat for experimentation was sent to Cuba apparently in accordance with Castro's suggestion, and for his attention to this sort of truly important matters the crown thanked him with an earnestness indicative of the fact that authorities in Spain were weary of the colony's bickerings to which nevertheless Castro contributed his share in insisting that his predecessor's Cubeños and apparently other property as well should be turned over by Duero to him as perquisites of his office. Pero Nuñez de Guzman, treasurer, died in the summer of 1527 and the *audiencia* appointed Duero to be his temporary successor without

consulting the royal officials of Santo Domingo. They had a certain superiority over Cuba's officials, dating back to times when Pasamonte was treasurer general for all the Indies, and so in rebuke to Guzman for overlooking that detail, the crown ordered Castro instead to act *pro tem* as treasurer too, and presently Duero died without achieving what seems to have been his ambition, in which his friends did their best to aid him,—to be a royal official on royal commission. To succeed Pero Nuñez came Lope Hurtado. Dour, crabbed as his handwriting (which arouses rage in patient paleographers!), at odds with all the world in defence of his majesty's royal patrimony, Hurtado seems nevertheless to have been that very rare creature which the king assuredly needed in his business: an honest man. Through years and over many pages of tiresome communications to his superiors, Hurtado defended his character as such while reiterating without respite his accusation that beside him there was none other in all the island. In vain the crown sought to stay the treasurer's bitter, impassioned loquacity. Not even accumulating heavy centuries have muzzled him, for he wrote and wrote and still wrote on, and his communications have been preserved, so that when finally the great silence did fall upon him there was nevertheless left in the archives of his country the echo of his querulous insistent voice talking determinedly of conspiracies, perjured witnesses, false keys and the like paraphernalia of dishonesty; so there remains on Cuba's history the impress of a character which was valuable, though not agreeable, because it was stubborn.

Pero Nuñez had left a considerable estate,—his Cubeños *encomendados* had been seven hundred before

five hundred of them died! The governor as *repartidor* "commended" the remnant of them to the widow, Doña Catalina de Aguero, and then married the lady, by himself so handsomely dowered. His enemies (especially Hurtado, the dead man's successor in office, who considered that he had been cheated out of these *encomendados* though Guzman said he had given Hurtado one hundred and thirty of them and thirty others, which the crown agreed was quite enough) made the most of this pleasant arrangement in reporting Guzman's conduct to the crown; Charles, however, had given previous consent to the marriage. Pero Nuñez's mother, Doña Leonor de Quinoñes at Avila in Spain, protested that she and her other children were not duly considered in partition of the deceased's property. Noisy suits were brought which dragged through court after court for years, the while Guzman and Doña Catalina profited by the nine points of law which lie in possession! The bishop,—even that cautious citizen Manuel de Rojas,—became involved. Pero de Paz was concerned, on behalf of Doña Leonor who was his mother-in-law. The affair is of historical interest only as an illustration to explain the savage animosity of Cuba's officials toward each other during all this period: they were engaged in a family feud and possession of wretched Cubeños was the bone of their quarrel. In vain the crown sought to allay their enmities: "Your differences," they were to no purpose informed, "can redound only in setbacks to the development of that island." They descended to brawls, such, for instance, as occurred when Guzman removed from the cathedral where he had sought refuge one Esteban Basiniano, a Genoese who had broken jail where he

was confined for having imported 35 more negro slaves into the island than he had the proper licenses to bring. Before the culprit was retaken the governor had arrested two *regidores*, broken the verge and torn the shirt of an illustrious *alcalde*, Bernaldino de Quesada, and had called the *cabildo* "a clique, not a council" because he found it in what he considered unauthorized session outside the legal meeting place. The *audiencia* was by letter asked to send a special judge to investigate their charge that Guzman had outraged the dignity of these municipal authorities, and the court did so, for which the crown reprimanded the *audiencia* because it acted when no person had appeared as complainant. It was not shown, the crown maintained, that the governor had exceeded his authority. The council was commanded to indulge in no more unjustified complaints, nor meet in improper places. Quesada was compensated, so gossip ran, for his torn shirt and ruffled composure by a grant of 80 *encomendados*. The outraged church for her part fined the governor for violating the sanctuary her altar was to malefactors, and one Sunday as penance "the very magnificent *señor*" Gonzalo de Guzman stood through mass bare of his bonnet and stripped of all the regalia of his office humbly holding a candle in his hand.

Late in 1528 *Maestro* Miguel Ramirez (Dominican), chosen to be bishop of Cuba and abbot of Jamaica, left Spain for Santiago. He had been presented on January 1, 1527, to succeed Don Juan de Ubi(c)te who resigned the bishopric of Cuba on April 4, 1525. Ramirez was also made protector of Indians, an office which was supposed to be a check upon that of *repartidor*.

It is possible that Don Juan was not the first bishop

of Cuba; his bulls were dated February 10, 1517, and a year and a half after that he seems to have despatched a representative to take possession. It is possible that prior to 1517 he had a predecessor; Gomara, for instance, states that Cuba's first bishop was Hernando de Mesa, a Dominican friar. I have seen no document referring to any bishop prior to Don Juan de Ubite, nor indeed have I taken much time to look for any. It is astonishing, to me, to find so little evidence prior to the days of Bishop Juan de Cabezas, of any tangible effect of the church in Cuba itself on Cuba's development.

I have seen no evidence that Bishop Ubite concerned himself very much about his bishopric except to collect its tithes. He claimed to have trouble in obtaining his portion of these. Collection of this revenue seems to have begun in 1515 when the crown ordered that one-third of what was then thought to be due, be collected and expended in church-building, tithes thereafter to be regularly collected in kind, not in coin. It was the crown's intention in 1515 to farm the tithes, but I do not think that this was done, certainly not successfully for any long period of time. The collection of tithes is first mentioned as a duty of the royal officials representing the crown; relationship between crown and papacy in this matter in Cuba seems not to have been clearly determined this early. Ubite for instance engaged in a suit at law with the crown concerning "royal thirds," a financial burden the crown had elsewhere successfully imposed upon the clergy, and 700 *pesos* involved were long held up pending judgment which seems finally to have gone against the bishop for the crown took over the 700 *pesos* at the same time bestowing certain alms on the churches of Cuba, evidently to salve the royal

conscience. However, the people were expected to pay tithes as due to God regardless whether the immediate destination of the contribution were priestly purse or crown coffer; the governor was ordered to see to it that they did so and that no person left the island owing. A question arose as to whether the crown estates should pay tithes; the royal officials argued that since those of *comendadores* of Santiago did not pay much less should the crown's, since the king was master of the order, but their view did not prevail for the crown ordered that the royal estates pay,—as a favor to the bishop not as an obligation.

On October 22, 1523, His Holiness and his Most Catholic Majesty agreeing, Bishop Ubite was authorized to remove his cathedral from Baracoa (which he claimed was unhealthy!) to Santiago, "the principal place in the island." A site was assigned it there and later nearby lots of land were given for the residence of its clergy, doubtless the same they still occupy near the principal *plaza* of the city. The church buildings of Cuba in 1523 were "of straw," i. e., of board and thatch, and their style of architecture improved very slowly though the king gave half of his share of the tithes toward completion and ornamentation of Santiago's church and Bishop Ubite does seem to have interested himself in providing for two churches at Trinidad, one at Sancti Spiritus, and one at Havana, and his provisor named Gomez Arias expended 900 pesos, a considerable sum, in repairing that of Santiago after a hurricane had damaged if not destroyed it. Bishop Ubite himself prospered, for it is recorded that he came to own 200 head of cattle, a few black and Indian slaves, two horses and a mare.

The crown was willing that the new bishop, *Maestro* Miguel Ramirez, should do as well: the governor and officials were ordered to assign him farming land for his maintenance and ranges for cattle. In the retinue which accompanied him he had licenses to take half a dozen black slaves and two white slave women.

Before Gonzalo de Guzman had occupied the governor's chair two years it had become evident that it would be desirable to subject him to a *residencia* at the end of that time, as the law required. The task was assigned to the *Licenciado* Juan Vadillo, who in 1525 had been commissioned by the crown to collect debts due it in La Española, San Juan de Puerto Rico, Cuba and Jamaica. He had set out on that mission provided with clerks and a sheriff and so thoroughly did he work he left a wake wherever he passed of lamenting debtors petitioning for time! In October, 1528, being then in Santo Domingo he received orders to call upon the vireine, Doña Maria de Toledo, widow of Diego Colon and guardian of his heir, the Admiral Luis Colon, for a thirty-day commission as governor's lieutenant in Cuba during which period he was to *residenciar* Guzman according to instructions which would be furnished him by Secretary Cobos and at the end of that time he was to return the verge to Guzman whom the crown held, he was informed, in high esteem. Vadillo was actually provided with a *cedula* recommitting the government to Guzman after thirty days; the existence of this *cedula* was supposed to be a secret, but it did not remain so. Such a mission was not to Vadillo's liking. He replied with towering pride that in this matter he obeyed because his monarch commanded; otherwise an admiral's appointment was not acceptable to him

who like his father and his grandfather before him had served kings of Castile and Aragon and not mere admirals of Indies! “*Stolz lieb’ ich meinen Spanier!*” He remarked that it was not specified what salary he was to receive and that Cobos’ instructions had not been sent, and he made these omissions his excuse to delay departing for Cuba. He called attention to the fact that nothing was said as to whether he was also to act as *repartidor* of Cubeños during the *residencia*, by stating flatly that the manner in which the natives of the island were distributed, townsful to some men and none at all to others, was depopulating the country: the natives died and the Spaniards left. This hint which was doubtless followed up by “wire-pulling” of which I have seen no record had its effect in that the *repartimiento* of natives was eventually placed with Vadillo, jointly with the bishop, during the term of his activities in Cuba. In July of 1529 Vadillo was still protesting against the job which had befallen him: the time allowed was too short and the conditions under which he was to proceed made the *residencia* a farce. Finally, however, compelled by a commission dated February 27th, 1531, which he received before July following, Vadillo prepared to go, the while reiterating his demand that a longer period be allowed him: forty days were not enough for the journey and sixty for the investigation, auditing of accounts, etc., etc. His time was accordingly extended. A salary of 600 *maravedises* per diem payable from Cuba’s three-keyed chest had been assigned him, control of the *repartimiento* had been included in his powers, and at the end of his investigation of Guzman Vadillo was authorized to seat as governor’s lieutenant in Cuba the man he thought

fit, providing Doña María de Toledo had not meanwhile made the appointment, his incumbent to hold office until she did so. Evidently since 1528 the crown's confidence in Guzman had abated.

There was sufficient reason that it should do so. There is no space here to chronicle in the detail in which the records at Seville have preserved them the charges and counter-charges in which governor, bishop, officials, council and individuals indulged through these five years, when every man used the best weapons he could lay hand to,—bribery, defamation, arrest, confiscation, excommunication and assassination. The situation became intolerable. "The original Iberian tradition" had resolved "local patriotism" into anarchy. Jealousy and the hatred it breeds in small communities had brought about chaos out of which it was Vadillo's task to establish order in matters of finance and justice. He was equal to that task; he had ability and it was augmented by the temper in which he came.

He arrived in Santiago on November 6, 1531. The city council petitioned that the sixty days in which he was to take Guzman's *residencia* be reckoned from the date on which all the settlements in the island should be officially informed of his arrival and purpose, and on December 13th he (having meanwhile taken a first glance at the accounts he was to audit) announced that for sixty days after New Year's then approaching, he would hear charges against Guzman which he seemed to imply would largely concern unwise "commendations" of natives, various incidents involving the fiscal interests of the crown, and sins of loose living among the colonists. Presumably by that date all concerned would be thoroughly advised of the *residencia*.

Commencing then on January 1, 1532, old grievances were refurbished for Vadillo's inspection. On strength of the evidence laid before him Vadillo accused the governor of interfering with free expression of the popular will in matters of election of *alcaldes* and *procuradores*; of naming *capitanes* to represent him in settlements where he might not have lieutenants; of levying unauthorized taxes for campaigns against the natives (and also of not extending sufficient protection against the chief rebel among them when asked to do so!); of buying against the city council's wishes a certain house for fifty *pesos* to serve as a jail; of compelling the people of Santiago to contribute the labor of slaves and *encomendados* to the clearing of a road from the town to the harbor mouth, to open which some thought dangerous; of collecting from residents along a certain street from the *plaza* to the waterfront, on which houses of his faced, a sum of money to pave it which money was never so expended; of commissioning notaries, to do which neither he nor the council of Santiago had any authority; of exercising his office of inspector in the *fundicion* through a substitute which assuredly was not permissible; of carelessness with respect to his duties there; of not compelling married men to go home to their wives in Spain or else send for them; of condoning the importation of negroes not accompanied by proper licenses; of accepting gifts, of overlooking concubinage and gambling, etc., etc.; of tempering justice to his friends while inflicting it sometimes without regard to details of lawful jurisdiction but with speed and rigor upon persons not in enjoyment of his favor. In the matter of *repartimiento* Vadillo accused Guzman of keeping secret a royal provision which insisted that the

maximum *encomienda* be 100 as determined in 1522, and he also accused the governor of having misled the crown in obtaining confirmation of a clause in preceding ordinances which made the maximum 300; he accused him of assigning Cubeños to his relatives and friends in utter contempt of royal *cedulas* forbidding such partiality, adding "offence to offence" in this particular; of "commending" natives to persons not eligible to be *encomenderos*, of being a party to what were in effect sales of *encomiendas* made by certain persons he was pleased to permit to leave the country. The governor defended himself valiantly and when Vadillo "finding him guilty on most counts," stripped him of his offices of *fundicion* inspector (which Castro served until Guzman's reinstatement) and of *regidor*, and imposed fines, Guzman appealed, very much preferring the council for the Indies in Spain to the *audiencia* in Santo Domingo (of which Vadillo was a judge) to which court those cases involving minor amounts were in regular routine referred. When the *licenciado* ordered him to present himself before the crown with the records of his *residencia* Guzman prepared to go well armed not only for defence but for offence against all his enemies.

On March 1st, 1532, Vadillo having closed Guzman's *residencia* (leaving much unfinished,—many cases were handed over to an *alcalde*), Manuel de Rojas to whom the viceroy's appointment to the governorship had been made out, was with some difficulty persuaded to accept the office. He was duly received by the hesitating city council which had petitioned Vadillo vainly to retain the *verge*, despite the fact that he had not pronounced sentences against Guzman quite fast enough to satisfy that body. The council was reassured that it was proper

to receive Rojas without other command from the crown than that embodied in the royal *cedula* to Vadillo covering this point, and the crown itself presently advised the council that it had done right in so receiving him.

Vadillo then turned his whole attention to finishing the auditing of accounts which he had begun on arrival. He looked over the records of treasurers from Cuellar through Pero Nuñez's incumbency. He ordered collected from Guzman as heir to Velazquez who was heir to Cuellar, 3000 *pesos* as the amount of certain debts to the crown left unpaid because, Vadillo considered, of Cuellar's negligence. Guzman was accused of intentionally failing to see to it that Pero Nuñez's accounts were promptly audited. Vadillo found the former treasurer to owe the crown 3430 *pesos* and seems to have collected 2010 from his estate in Guzman's possession and to have sought the balance from those persons who went his bond. Vadillo held Pero Nuñez responsible for heavy losses to the crown in the bankruptcy of Pedro de Xeres, renter of the customs collections, and compelled Francisco de Aguero, bondsman, to defend himself against demands that he make good 9559 *pesos* on this score. Vadillo audited the accounts of other royal officials and generally cleaned up matters financial down to June 1, 1532. Instructions were left with the royal officials to guide them thereafter in their administration of crown affairs, and they were to render a half-yearly instead of a yearly statement of those affairs. Vadillo endeavored to straighten out Hurtado's and Castro's claims to the Cubeños of their predecessors, apparently finding their contentions correct. The bishop and Guzman, however, so strenuously resisted

his decision in this matter that Rojas took the *encomendados* concerned into his own possession,—“shrunk to a third what they were,”—and referred the quarrel to the crown. In many instances final revisions confirming or reversing Vadillo’s decisions were not obtained until years after, in the court of final jurisdiction in Spain.

Now, in the spring of 1532 the settlements had, as in former years, sent their *procuradores* to Santiago. Vadillo, to whom they came accredited, was not prepossessed in their favor. In 1529 and 1530 elections of *alcaldes* and *procuradores* had given rise to scandalous scenes. Guzman objected to the election of Gonzalo de Escobar in 1530 and mauled him during a council session; he sought to alter the accepted manner of choosing the *alcaldes*, and *regidores* who appealed from his decision in this regard were jailed until such time as they changed their point of view. Guzman complained that popular elections excited the people. In July, 1529, nevertheless, Juan Barba was elected *procurador* by ballots cast in the church of Santiago before an *alcalde* in such manner that the governor in whose house they were counted could not tell how each citizen had voted. Although Guzman received Barba’s oath of office he seems to have declined to issue him “due powers,” i. e., papers accrediting him as *procurador*. The *regidores* inclined so to equip him. Quarrels ensued. The governor eventually compassed the election of his brother-in-law Francisco de Aguero. Next year (March, 1530) the governor and *alcaldes* in the same sacred edifice held a *viva voce* election, each voter being sworn before he expressed to them his preference. Each was asked also if he had been approached by any persons seeking

to influence his opinion: it was evidently the intention to prove that popular elections led to disturbance, bribery and perjury. Francisco Osorio was declared elected *procurador* by this method and his "power" (of attorney for the community) was forthwith signed by *alcaldes* and citizens or marked by those among them who could not write. To obviate disputes and disturbances, appeal was made to the *audiencia* to prescribe the manner in which elections should be held and that court of which Vadillo was a part expressed vigorous disapproval of *procuradores* popularly chosen and grave doubt if they made for good government. There were no such *procuradores* in La Española nor ever would be if the *audiencia's* views prevailed. The *audiencia* declared they contributed little to the general welfare, and, on the contrary, caused "restlessness and scandal." Vadillo believed the councils should elect both *alcaldes* and *procuradores*. These being his views, it is obvious why he was not prepossessed in favor of the *procuradores* who presented themselves to him in 1532 especially since the persons chosen and the manner of their choosing confirmed suspicion that Guzman's influence throughout the island had selected them among his own kinsmen and followers,—that they were, in fine, part of "the machine." Vadillo summed them up as detrimental to the interests of the crown and of the people and some of them he flatly declined to recognize at all, discovering flaws in their credentials.

Among those entirely thrown out of court was Juan Bono de Quexo of Havana and in this action it would appear that Vadillo was justified, for the existing documents seem to show that Bono de Quexo was not properly elected by the people of Havana on New Year's

day (as *procuradores* should be and others were) but instead was chosen by *alcaldes* and *regidores*. Alonso Sanchez del Corral, Guzman's uncle, appeared in representation of Sancti Spiritus and apparently was not recognized. Baracoa sent up Pedro Martin who seems to have returned home very shortly convinced that Vadillo was "more of a tyrant than a judge," for in April the *justicia* and *regidores* of Asuncion in very great bitterness laid their situation before the crown, and expressed the hope that the next judge who came to the island might be "a humane person, competent to appreciate qualities, and one who knows what Indies are and that Spanish colonials are not Indians." Alonso de Aguilar had come up to represent Puerto Principe and Francisco Rabanal, Bayamo. There exists a letter (dated August 8, 1532) written by Vasco Porcallo de Figueroa, arriving at that unusual season as *procurador* for Sancti Spiritus, in which he states that when he reached Santiago he found none of the other representatives there because Vadillo had refused to recognize most of them, this to the grievous detriment of the towns' privileges. I have seen no evidence that after this date the *procuradores* ever again assembled at the spring *fundicion* to consult together and jointly make their petitions and their protests on behalf of the island to the crown. Vadillo was their Villalar! This was the end, I should say, of the sporadic inclination previously mentioned toward representative government, at this very early date, in Cuba. Vadillo's treatment of their *procuradores* fertilized the municipalities to seeds of animosity against him which Guzman was busily sowing all this while, with every anticipation of reaping therefrom a quick harvest.

Vadillo sailed for Santo Domingo on July 9, 1532. He seems to have been indeed "a righteous judge," zealous, as Pedro de Paz said, in making collection of moneys due the crown and in distributing justice,—in fulfilling, that is, his dual mission to Cuba. The council was doubtless representative of the community in petitioning him to retain the verge, nor was the accountant, probably, alone in lamenting that he left the island too soon (with the expiration of his commission) since, as said, many suits remained unsettled, the auditing of accounts was not completed, some minor accounts were entirely untouched, and much money was still due to be paid. In collecting it, however, he seems to have inspired local officials with something of his own spirit for they gathered it in and forwarded it properly. Nevertheless Vadillo did not retire from Cuba amid blessings from all the people.

He did not, for instance, escape without encounters with Bishop Ramirez, "a great disturber and scandal-maker," as Hurtado described him. These difficulties began the moment the bishop, interrupting a visit to Jamaica (said to have been detrimental to the welfare and quietude of that dependency of his diocese), returned to Santiago shortly after Vadillo's arrival there. The bishop was Guzman's violent partisan during the *residencia*, seeking to prevent witnesses from testifying against him by threats that he would excommunicate those who did so. Vadillo confiscated gold mined by the *encomendados* held by the bishop's niece's husband, on the ground that he was but a dummy, the real *encomendero* being the bishop himself who was ineligible to have them,—moreover the special lot concerned belonged, Vadillo decided, to Hurtado as

perquisite of his office of treasurer. Vadillo ordered that charges collected for burial services should not be in excess of those usual in Santo Domingo (he was later upheld by royal *cedula*). The bishop, being so irritated, attempted to reprimand Vadillo publicly in the church, but the *licenciado* turned on his heel and left the place. No sooner had Vadillo cleared from Santiago, however, than the bishop excommunicated him and swore, so Vadillo was told, to "ruin him by way of the inquisition." The *licenciado* was incensed. In laying the matter before the crown and so appealing to Charles for protection, Vadillo said that his chief offence was that he had interfered with the bishop's provisor when he and a Dominican arrested "for the inquisition" one Juan Millan, a good citizen and a *conquistador* who was about to embark for Spain where, presumably, he would too accurately inform the crown and council for the Indies of the bishop's and of Guzman's conduct of affairs in Cuba. He had been a witness against Guzman. Vadillo explained that when he saw Millan taken into custody for the inquisition he thought the thing a joke. It was news to Vadillo and to all Santiago that Ponce de Asis, provisor, who made the arrest, or the bishop who on arriving sanctioned it, had any authority whatsoever from the holy office. Later evidently discovering that they were within their right,—that Millan's detention was legal,—Vadillo being a good lawyer acquiesced in it, regretfully however since he had and expressed a good opinion of Millan. The *audiencia* protested against the bishop's "rough presumption" in excommunicating a judge whose offence was that he "defended royal justice," and promptly the crown itself reprimanded the bishop

for excommunicating Vadillo and peremptorily ordered him to remove the ban. The inquisitor general of Indies acted quickly in the same sense. The bishop was discomfited and Vadillo exonerated. Excommunications of leading citizens who with Vadillo had rushed to Millan's release seem presently to have taken the profitable shape of fines collected by the bishop. Millan must have gotten off as light for he reappears in the records.

On August 16, 1532, Guzman, freighted down with eulogies, memorials and accusations, and accompanied by the bishop going to be consecrated, left for Spain in Hurtado's wake in a stout ship owned by Francisco Gomez, resident of the villa de Moquer, who had come around from Santo Domingo laden with sugar and *cassia fistularis* and hides. Aboard it too went 1450 pesos for the crown, being the king's percentage of gold from the *fundicion* then in progress, and customs duties collected.

Doubtless Manuel de Rojas, left as governor's lieutenant in Cuba, saw Guzman and Bishop Ramirez drop over the horizon with every feeling of relief: it was as though gracious Providence was affording him in their absence an opportunity to maintain and augment good order in the colony which Vadillo had in some sort restored. Unfortunately, however, Cuba had not yet reached low water in her decline.

## CHAPTER IX

### “DIFFERENT LIBERTY” (TO 1535)

“*Indios no son capaces ni tienen pensamiento sino en comer y holgar y ofender a Nuestro Señor.*”—Lope Hurtado, *A. de I.*, 54-1-34.

Manuel de Rojas' principal concern was the natives of the island. Vadillo estimated the Indian population, aboriginal and imported, to be between 4500 and 5000 at this period. The issue the Cubeños constituted had come to a head.

Even before Velazquez's death, many rose in arms against the whites, at the time when in his interest in Mexico the *adelantado* lightened his hand on Cuba. From their refuges on islets along the coast they raided the Spaniards' estates, burning and killing. In 1523 Velazquez made Rodrigo de Tamayo captain to proceed (not for the first time) against such “key Indians (*indios cayos*) and against the others with them or in any manner up in arms and rebellion,” to kill and capture as he could and to maim or brand and sell what captives he took, according to their degree of culpability. These latter powers Altamirano reconferred on Tamayo under separate title of *justicia* with exclusive jurisdiction over such cases. The crown approved this procedure against the natives and by royal *cedula* Guzman was authorized to offer first peace, and if it were not accepted on the Christians' own terms (that

the Cubeños return to "the fidelity, service and obedience" expressed in the *repartimiento* system), then war, all prisoners taken to be slaves of their captors.

Though the governor reported the island tranquil in the first months of 1527, early in 1528 there appeared at Bayamo and Puerto Principe a band of thirty or forty *cimarrones* (natives run "wild" as compared with *mansas*, i. e., "tame," *indios de paz*, of peace). Guzman said that the leaders in this movement were north shore "key Indians" reinforced by natives from two villages near Sancti Spiritus. Spaniards from there sent to Santiago for help but meanwhile dispersed the marauding bands, killing two chiefs who claimed through supernatural powers to be immune to Spanish weapons and to know all that transpired through the whole island. This is the first mention I have seen in Cuban documents of "witch-craft." Guzman declared that it was "not convenient that squads of armed men ever be lacking to serve against Indians in arms; they are needed to keep down even the tame Indians who accept intercourse with Spaniards as cheerfully as they would dig out their own eyes." Funds were raised by some sort of a levy and the governor, conducting the campaign in person, later failed, or so Hurtado and the town council declared, to render account of the money. Neither was the revolt successfully ended; travel remained distinctly unsafe except for guarded parties.

In 1528 a second pestilence (small-pox) began to rage through Cuba nor did it cease soon. It seemed almost as though the Almighty proposed to end the Cubeños' martyrdom in the one certain manner since his Most Catholic Majesty of Spain failed to mitigate it. "I

am displeased,” the crown wrote of the deaths of Cubeños, “on their account and because of the effect on that island’s population and on the settlers, but concerning the acts of God there is naught to be said save to give thanks, and to urge you, the governor, continually to see to it that those left are well treated that they may be preserved, and instructed in the things of our Holy Catholic Faith in order that they may be saved.”

Still there was spirit enough among the survivors to reanimate revolt in October, 1529, when *cimarrones* killed nine or ten “honorable *conquistadores*,” many peaceable natives and blacks who served them, destroyed plantings, burned houses, slaughtered stock and indulged in cruelties. Authorized to wage war, the Spaniards levied on themselves a six months’ tax and so raised 304 pesos for another war against the outlaws. They went out against the natives in parties from Bayamo and elsewhere; Manuel de Rojas maintained three such parties of Spaniards, negroes and Indians in the field for three months. “Justice was done,” and though “some escaped and disappeared” presently the crown was advised that order had been restored and the highways made safe again. The tranquility was, however, only comparative. To make it absolute Rojas seems to have entertained plans for an extensive war: he desired to coast the island in canoes, cleaning the rebels out from their resorts in the keys as he went, and he even laid in supplies for this purpose, but it seems that Governor Guzman denied him authority to act, lest, gossips said, he might distinguish himself unduly. Nevertheless Guzman seems to have consented eventually that something should be done, but

I take it that plans were suspended by Vadillo's arrival a little later.

Vadillo seems to have tried by pacific solicitation to bring the most notorious of the native outlaws, a chief named Guama, into obedience. Guzman, Rojas declared, had avoided molesting this rebel and for years he had therefore maintained himself with a harem in almost undisturbed liberty in the mountains, where on hidden *ranchos* with perhaps sixty followers he industriously cultivated crops for support, not seeking, it would seem, to live by depredations. Now, however, Rojas determined to extirpate the menace, alarmed perhaps by a rumor that the rebel chieftain Enriquillo who had wrought havoc in La Española, was planning to cross to Cuba to join forces with Guama. The campaign seems to have opened with an expedition under one Antonio Lopez against natives doing damage around Santiago; they had kidnapped two women. Then against Guama himself in December, 1532, Rojas despatched a fighting force under Diego Barba who drove the chief from his principal camp killing some of his followers and capturing others of them, two of whom Rojas hung as ringleaders. Others he punished and returned to their *encomenderos* and some seventeen women and small children he gave as lifehold *naborias* to Barba and his men. Of all this the crown approved when informed. Rojas himself went up to Baracoa where the situation seemed still serious as it also became around Bayamo where the rebels looted the cross-roads stores of Venta de Cauto, a by no means unimportant trade center. Under Gonzalo de Obregon the Spaniards camped on Guama's trail; sorely harried, his band came back to its old stamping ground for food,

having no other supply. Before the end of March Obregon and the Spaniards who had served under him were in Santiago with seven more captives, one of whom, a Jamaican, had been “wild” for nine years. Guama himself, these said, was dead, treacherously killed by his own brother who used a hatchet as he lay asleep. This brother then assumed leadership of the few men, perhaps ten, with half as many women, who were all that was left of Guama’s band. These prisoners denied that they had killed Spaniards, or negroes or peaceful natives, or that Guama had done worse than make away with the men of his own following, possibly whenever their number seemed likely to grow beyond his power to control, augmented as his band was especially from the nearby Baracoa mines whose *encomendados* fled to him in ones and twos “and even in sevens.” Hernando de Castro recognized *naborias* of his among these captives and in endeavoring to obtain possession of them cited the royal *cedula* of January 25, 1531, forbidding that Indians taken in war be made slaves, and further *cedulas* declaring Cubeños to be free vassals of the crown. Nevertheless (relying it would seem on authority from Santo Domingo) Rojas condemned the seven, as those taken captive earlier had been condemned, to be not slaves, he was careful to specify though he said they deserved slavery, but *naborias perpetuas* (lifehold servants) “during the king’s pleasure” of their captors who, according to the regular formula, were bidden to instruct them in the faith, clothe and feed them. Thus were Obregon and the Spaniards who served under him recompensed over and above the three and a half *pesos* monthly of their pay. The Indians and negroes who campaigned with

them were rewarded with *acona*, i. e., gifts of clothing, etc. So all were kept in good humor to *ranchear* (as this particular form of hunting was then called). At the same time Rojas sent a messenger to the remnants of Guama's band, urging them to come in. Although the crown praised Castro as "a good servant," and bade him forward the documents of his action in protest against Rojas' distribution of the captives taken, the governor's vigorous policy in the matter was upheld even over the fiscal's protests. I have not found any further mention of organized resistance of the natives against the Spaniards. In secret stockaded camps (*palenques*) in the fastnesses of the mountains, however, some still maintained their freedom.

Conflict remained unreconciled between the theory, officially so frequently expressed, that the Cubeños were the free, loyal vassals of the crown, and the unlovely facts of the *repartimiento* system of their bondage. In notable contrast with his generosity to Cuba in matters of political administration after Velazquez' death, Charles at that very period showed himself jealous, for his conscience' sake, of his divine right to dispose of the liberty and so of the life of the Cubeños.

The Jeronimite monks, religious persons that they were, succumbed to the influence of that "uncontrolled greed" they were sent to check; their tribunal was abolished and on August 4, 1526, the crown made Gonzalo de Guzman who was already *juez de residencia* and governor, also *repartidor* of the natives of Cuba defining his authority to be precisely what Velazquez's had been. What Cubeños hard labor, disease and war had left alive were helpless in his hands, for the au-

*diciencia* of Santo Domingo was instructed not to interfere with his exercise of this office as it and other persons had without authority tried to interfere with his predecessors'. The *alcaldes* of the island were slightly more successful in retaining what jurisdiction in this matter they had usurped from Velazquez, for when Guzman appointed *alcaldes visitadores* to visit the mines where natives were at work (Colon during his visit in 1522 had sent out similar officials) the *alcaldes ordinarios* of the municipalities resented it and late in 1528 the crown abolished the *alcaldes visitadores* (inspector-judges). Guzman and Ramirez, who found their prerogatives as *repartidor* and protector somewhat clipped by this order, forthwith appointed two general inspectors, Juan de Baroja and Pero Alvarez. The city of Santiago protested, calling especial attention to the fact that these general inspectors were paid rather well for doing work the *alcaldes ordinarios* formerly did for nothing extra, as far at least as was observable in the king's counting house. The crown accordingly abolished the general inspectors, and restored their duties to the municipal *alcaldes*. The governor and bishop were forbidden to name inspectors except those necessary to report on *encomiendas* held by the *alcaldes* themselves. This decision was, apparently, hastened by the character of the general inspectors they had chosen: an ugly scandal beset one at Baracoa, and at Puerto Principe the other began to exercise his functions without presenting himself before the town council there. Guzman sent Juan de la Torre as a special judge along with other officials on salaries to investigate the disturbance which ensued at Puerto Principe in course of which an *alcalde* and two *regidores* were

arrested and deprived temporarily at least of their *encomiendas*.

Even earlier than this the crown had evidently come to consider the unhampered control of the Cubeños by one man an unsatisfactory arrangement. Fray Pedro Mexia de Trillo of La Española, provincial of the Franciscan order, had been instructed to go to Cuba to investigate, and punish, charges of bodily mistreatment of *encomendados* which had led the crown to believe the Cubeños to be the saddest among his subjects despite the colonists' stout assertions that the contrary was the case; and he was to carry out the emperor's determination to liberate the natives "within the limits of right living and religion, that they might increase, not decrease." Only a great divergence of views among "theologians and learned conscientious persons" whom he had consulted at great length in the matter had prevented Charles from doing this before; now he was determined to act on behalf of the Cubeños, pending final decision of his eminent counsellors, because he understood that the Cubeños were most in need of relief among all his American vassals. It was ordered that laws forbidding Spaniards to take Cubeños to Spain as slaves be vigorously enforced, and it is interesting to note that some who were so conveyed to Spain were freed by courts of law there before which they succeeded in getting a hearing.

Fray Pedro was, so he claimed, preparing to leave La Española for Cuba on this mission when he heard of Guzman's appointment as *repartidor*. He foresaw a conflict between their jurisdictions; on May 10, 1527, he secured from the *audiencia* of Santo Domingo a definition of his authority, the court expressing the

opinion that it remained to the governor to assign real property among the settlers whereas it was Fray Pedro's business to “commend” Cubeños. Before the end of May Governor Guzman appealed from this interpretation, protesting that the *audiencia* had no authority to make it. As evidence that it was his prerogative to allot the natives to service he cited the very clear wording of his appointment as *repartidor*; and he also pointed out the fact that to grant lands had, on the other hand, been a function of the town councils ever since their establishment.

The settlers of Cuba were aware of the crown's intentions, as expressed in correspondence with Fray Pedro, and the prior of the Dominican monastery of La Española had forwarded certain instructions, approved by the *audiencia*, ordering a test made of the Cubeños' capacity for liberty. It appears to have been made in one short month and (in so brief a period!) Guzman claimed to have accumulated evidence to prove the aboriginal people unfit for responsibility. In the same communication he informed the crown that the natives were up in arms against the Spaniards.

The *procuradores* speaking for the colony assured Charles that if his proposed policy of freeing the natives were adopted, what Cubeños had not rebelled would assuredly rise, kill off all the Christians, and return to their vices and idolatry as, his Catholic majesty was assured, they invariably did the moment vigilance was relaxed. Moreover, the Spaniards “since they have no other means of support save the aforesaid Indians” would abandon the island to the devil who had possessed it previously. A second conquest would become necessary. The *procuradores* therefore petitioned that

existing *encomiendas* be maintained "because God would be served thereby and our (royal) revenues increased and the said Spaniards benefited and the island conserved as to population and the said Indians would come the sooner into true knowledge of our holy Catholic faith, being in communication with the said Christians." The crown in not altogether satisfactory response to this, reissued orders to Fray Pedro: to assemble into towns such as the Spaniards had, those Cubeños he judged capable of living to themselves where religion and crafts were to be taught them, in such manner that the Cubeños might increase and multiply. The governor was to coöperate in details of the execution of this command: honest clergy were to be appointed over the Cubeños so assembled, to give them to understand that it was the king's goodwill that they should live "like reasonable people" and favored vassals. Revolt or other disobedience was to forfeit their liberty and his countenance, for if it were found that they were indeed unfit to maintain themselves then to save their souls they were to be "commended" as before. On the conscience of Fray Pedro and Governor Gonzalo de Guzman the crown laid responsibility in this matter, bidding them bear always in mind that he considered the Cubeños freemen and desired them to be treated as such, not as slaves. If, finally, it were necessary to "commend" them, it should be done in all kindness, due provision being made for their food, clothing and protection from overwork.

Cuba's attention was called to a series of new ordinances concerning Indians. Preamble to these is a scathing recital of Spanish cruelties and the devastating effect of them. Fray Bartolome de las Casas in his

*History of the Indies* makes no worse charges than does Charles V. himself in this document (dated November 17, 1526) against Spaniards as responsible for the depopulation of the New World. Those portions of the *cedula* which most concerned Cuba were the paragraphs ordering that Indian slaves who had been imported into Cuba be returned to their native regions or if this were not possible, that they be considered no longer slaves but *encomendados* where they were, and especially the provisions that the aborigines should no longer be forced to work at mining. If they mined it must be of their own free will and on pay.

A month later this restriction was modified to permit the Cubeños to be used in washing gold though not in the heavier operations of excavating. Even so, vigorous complaint followed. Rodrigo Duran as Cuba's general *procurador* at court assured the crown that if even the modified order were enforced the Spaniards would leave the island; and that too just when new rich mines had been found. Guzman and Fray Pedro were requested to report on the point but meanwhile the order relieving the Cubeños was sustained. The municipal *procuradores* at their meeting in Santiago in 1528 repeated the colony's objections: they described mining as easy work, preferred by the Cubeños to that of clearing, burning and cultivating land, told how well fed the natives were at the mines on *cazabe* bread and meat every day (droves of hogs accompanied them to the hills) whereas other *encomendados* otherwise employed got meat or fish but twice a week; they described how improved the natives were by close association with the Christians in charge over them at the mines where close supervision gave them no opportu-

nity to revert to vices or idolatrous ceremonies, and they recounted the pastimes allowed them of dancing, ball games and hunting and fishing. Mining, they said, had killed no Cubeño nor caused any to rise in rebellion; moreover, it was the principal source of the Spaniards' profits in Cuba and ruin must follow prohibition of the use of Cubeños to get gold for if released from work "tame Indians" would join those others already in revolt and Spanish settlers must depart from Cuba, an island of material and strategical importance to the crown and to the crown's Indies. Meanwhile, until the monarch could be heard from once more in this matter, the *procuradores* insisted that Governor Guzman do nothing toward altering the condition of the natives.

At this juncture the crown referred the whole grave problem of the *repartimiento* system to Bishop Sebastian Ramirez of La Española who was also president of the *audiencia* there, to determine whether or not it should be continued. The bishop did not decide to abolish it in Cuba. Fray Pedro never went to Cuba. His mission devolved upon Bishop Ramirez.

Because the crown was still determined that the Cubeños should be "liberated and administered as free vassals and so come into knowledge of the Holy Faith," the *Maestro* Fray Miguel Ramirez had been named protector of the Indians in addition to being bishop of Cuba. His appointment as such empowered him to investigate charges of mistreatment of natives and to punish guilty *encomenderos*, by corporal chastisement, imprisonment, loss of *encomendados*, or fines. Appeal was to the governor except when the fine was less than fifty pesos or the jail term less than ten days. He had

this jurisdiction even over local civil officials. Ramirez was expected to issue ordinances to regulate employment of natives in mining and he had instructions to enforce previous *cedulas*, especially those issued to Fray Pedro Mexia concerning the “experiment” to be made as to the Cubeños’ capacity.

Never was protector of Indians more easily managed than Bishop Ramirez. The governor “insisted” that he accept *encomiendas* for his own service, and so he did despite a previous ruling that prelates and protectors were not to hold *encomendados* in service. A *cedula* was issued declaring both governor and bishop ineligible to be *encomenderos*. The crown expressed amazement that Fray Miguel should have accepted any assignment of natives since to hold them rendered him a poor judge of the welfare of Cubeños whom it was his particular mission to protect. When this order arrived, half a year after its date, evasion was easy: the bishop had his *encomiendas* transferred to Garcia Lopez, husband of a niece with whom Providence had opportunely provided him.

Meanwhile, nothing was done toward making the “experiment” ordered. Toward the end of 1529 the crown remarked his astonishment that the governor who had acknowledged receipt of instructions to himself and to the bishop in this matter, had nevertheless reported nothing done in obedience to them. Not until March, 1530, did Bishop Ramirez present to the council of Santiago the *cedulas* he had concerning this matter. He had held it in abeyance a year nor even then, having so presented his *cedulas*, did he take any action toward executing them. The council reminded him of his duty in a session which broke up in a brawl between council-

men on one side and governor and bishop on the other.

It was April, 1531, before Governor Guzman seriously undertook that "experiment" as the documents invariably call it. An *encomendero* named Pedro de Moron had died, leaving unassigned some 120 natives in two villages (both, possibly, in the Manzanillo district). These were chosen for the "experiment"; no selection, it will be observed, of the most capable was attempted despite the crown's orders on this point. Guzman commissioned a priest named Francisco Guerrero to assemble these natives, especially the principal men, and to advise them that if they proved competent, the crown was disposed to give them "a different liberty than that they had had." He was to tell them that they were thenceforth to live "like farmers of Castile" in a town of their own near Bayamo; their removal to that site was commanded on penalty of their being "commended" as usual or given away from their homes as *naborias*. Some difficulty in persuading them to leave their native villages was foreseen. Guerrero was to oversee their farms (corn and cotton were anticipated as their crops) and their hog-ranches. They were to pay tithes to the church and, to the crown, whatever was lawfully demanded. They were not to associate with *encomendados*. No idolatry was to be tolerated. If they still retained faith in the beliefs of their fathers, then they were "bad Christians" and Guerrero was to remind them that "bad Christians" were burned, as doubtless they had been made aware in the cases I have mentioned of Juan Muñoz and Escalante. They were to be taught that all their former notions of religion were the devil's inspirations; they were to be instructed

in Catholicism, and to pray and work on a schedule which Guerrero was to draw up and see observed. Governor Guzman expected that these freed Cubeños would spend their time in dancing, "a ruinous custom," he said, but unfortunately one that must be tolerated since the crown so commanded. They were to enjoy their own festivals but they were not, Guzman insisted, to be allowed to paint themselves nor to wear "those masks and devilish figures they are accustomed to put on (frontal amulets?)." The spirit of the governor's commission and instruction to Guerrero (the document has been preserved) indicates that he had little faith in the experiment and, obviously, he made it only under pressure he could no longer resist. He was not alone in his poor opinion of the natives. "Indians," Lope Hurtado wrote, "are not capable, nor have they a thought save to eat and idle and offend Our Lord nor is it of any use for priests to bring them up from youth nor to train them in other houses that they may believe in God, for as a parrot is taught to speak so they recite but when returned to their own they become like them, and worse than they, and so experience has demonstrated." The bishop was no more optimistic as to the outcome of "the experiment" so inaugurated. Vadillo considered it an element of disturbance and would have distributed the natives concerned as *encomendados* if he had had the necessary authority. Neither was Manuel de Rojas as successful in demonstrating the Cubeños' capacity or incapacity to live "like farmers in Castile" as he had been in making evident their ability to die in their own fashion.

He succeeded to Guzman's joint jurisdiction with the bishop in the matter of *repartimiento*. He reported that

"the experiment" had not been made in accordance with royal *cedulas* to the point, citing specifically the detail that no selection of capable Cubeños had been made for the test,—no choice exercised among those title to which had vacated during the given period the crown cited,—instead Pedro de Moron's lot had been delivered over to Guerrero of whose management of them Rojas did not approve. When the year expired for which Guzman had commissioned this priest to conduct "the experiment" Rojas declined for cause to continue him, naming Gaspar Caro in his place. Neither was Rojas happy in his selection of this man for Caro, alleging sickness, presently deserted his post and the Cubeños in his charge scattered though they were eventually collected together again. It would appear that Rojas at first believed there were Cubeños among the *encomendados* who were competent to "live like Spaniards," and he requested authority to remove them as he saw fit from the control of their masters *encomenderos*, granting liberty to all who requested freedom of him and on examination proved themselves competent, in his opinion, to maintain themselves. The crown issued such authority to him and the bishop jointly. Cubeños so freed were to pay vassalage at specified rates: married men, three *pesos* each and three for every male member of the household over twenty years of age; single men over twenty, three *pesos* per annum; all males between fifteen and twenty years, one *peso* per capita, yearly. *Caciques* were to be free of every obligation except this tribute, and all honors their people desired to show them were to be theirs to enjoy.

Evidently Rojas had not hesitated to state that revolt and unrest among the natives were due to Spanish

mistreatment. He mentioned as a detail of this mistreatment that “collectors” of runaway Cubeños, who evidently hunted them down out of the hills, sometimes brought their catches in bound and mishandled. Rojas suggested that natives be forbidden to pass from one district to another but that when they did so to escape from *encomenderos*, they should not be returned to such masters if investigation showed that cruelty they had endured justified their conduct. He thought that danger of losing *encomendados* might induce *encomenderos* to treat their Cubeños better. The crown (September, 1532) approved and ordered two *regidores* and six other good citizens to be named a committee to act with the governor and bishop to carry this plan into execution. Meanwhile, what provisions Rojas and Ramirez made in this matter were to be obeyed. In September, 1533, Sebastian Muñiz, the bishop’s provisor, Pedro de Paz and Hernando de Castro, *regidores*, and six other residents consulted with the governor in committee as the crown had commanded. “Collectors” of runaway *encomendados*, they reported, had not for some time been employed nor would be again; and they were not willing to follow Rojas in humane policies that jeopardized any *encomendero’s* right to his natives, not even his right to abuse them.

At just about this juncture Rojas’ attention was distracted by a negro uprising (November, 1533) at the new mines of Jobabo. From Bayamo he despatched men under Esteban de Lagos to quell this disturbance. The four negroes involved defended themselves to the death: their heads were brought in as trophies of what I believe was the first “black rebellion” in the island.

While in Bayamo en route to the mines at this time

Rojas announced to the Cubeños of "the experiment" whose village was nearby, the crown's intention as expressed in the *cedula* of September 28, 1532, i. e., to permit those Cubeños who asked and merited liberty to have it on payment of specified amount of vassalage, or, as Rojas interpreted this to them, since they had been a long time independent in that village without any benefit being apparent as result of the arrangement, the crown had decided to experiment further with fifteen or twenty of them on the conditions laid down in that *cedula* which they were to talk over among themselves that they might develop opinions to express to him later.

The following July being again in Bayamo Rojas was reminded by *cedulas* he received there of the matter of Cubeños' liberty. He had not meanwhile forgotten it for, as he travelled through the island on a tour of inspection he had notified the *encomendados* especially at the mines of the terms on which they might possibly secure liberty and one of these, "a good Indian called Diego, a *naburia* of Diego de Ovando," followed the governor into Bayamo to ask the liberty promised for himself and for his wife who accompanied him: until such time as his petition could be acted upon he stayed with the others of "the experiment" whom Rojas and the bishop's provisor were soon to visit and examine.

Muñiz who had taken part for the bishop in the conference held at Santiago the preceding September seems thereafter to have declined to assist Rojas. Fray Antonio de Toledo, guardian of the Franciscan monastery "obeyed" a *cedula* ordering him to take a hand in the matter but excused himself from complying with it on the ground that it was his business to pray

in tranquillity for the king and for the people,—not to mix in vexed and disturbing problems such as this one. However, the *Bachiller* Andrada,—“who seems to be honorable and well educated,” said Rojas,—had meantime arrived to replace Muñiz as bishop’s provisor, and he was well disposed to act with the governor in this matter. They decided to attend to it immediately after Christmas (1534), and as soon as the holidays were over they proceeded together to “the experiment” village near Bayamo where they found the Cubeños concerned almost all in their places, with no complaints to make of abuses, extortions or mistreatment against Caro or against one Poveda who succeeded him in charge. Rojas and Andrada examined them as to their capacity to be free and the governor reported that “by their own will to continue the experiment,” some thirty-two or three adults were selected (with their children making up a number of perhaps forty persons) who remained at least nominally independent in the village. Their spiritual guardianship was committed to “one Francisco Maldonado, *clerigo*, an honest and competent person,” and Alonso de Poveda, resident in Bayamo, was selected “to protect them politically and favor and defend them,” all according to instructions which were formulated. These two Spaniards drew salaries which the Cubeños paid as also they now saw paid out of their earnings all salary in arrears due Guerrero and Caro, and twenty *pesos* on account of the vassalage due to the crown. Twelve *pesos* of what they had earned was given to them in shovels and hatchets which “it seemed they needed.” Evidence showed that the gold they had mined under Guerrero had all been spent “by judge’s order.” Rojas informed

the crown that the rest of the village, some forty other persons, said they preferred to serve some master who would treat them well, rather than to undertake the responsibility of complying with the king's *cedula* which required payment of vassalage, etc., and therefore some thirty-four of them were forthwith "deposited" with Juan de Vergara "that he may make moderate use of them under certain conditions by which they may be better treated." All these provisions were subject to further orders the crown might issue, as the result of the rearrangement made itself evident.

Doubt that those Cubeños who were "commended" chose such service entirely of their own free will is aroused by the detail that of three given in compliance with *cedula* to that effect to *Bachiller* Diego Lopez, dean of the cathedral chapter, one (a fisherman) could not be found when it came to delivery "because the old ones among these Indians cannot endure association with us." A woman and child were assigned to the dean to take the place of the recalcitrant old fisherman and Maldonado too received one *naboria encomendada* for his personal service.

The Cubeños of the "experiment" being so disposed of, Rojas and the provisor turned their attention to the cases of natives from outside Bayamo who presented themselves to ask for liberty and to demonstrate their capacity to enjoy it. When on visiting the mines Rojas had announced the crown's order that freedom be given competent Cubeños who demanded it, four or five native men who knew Spanish proclaimed their intention to take advantage of the opportunity, but now (oddly enough!) none of them appeared, despite the fact that it was widely known that the governor

and provisor were in Bayamo acting in the matter. Diego who with his wife had followed the governor from Puerto Principe to Bayamo to obtain freedom was found lacking in religious instruction “although more developed in manner of living;” he and his wife were included in the number of Cubeños with whom the “experiment” village was continued. Another Cubeño named Cascorro, who was one of Rojas’ own *encomendados* “mediumly instructed in our faith though stupid in everything else,” was similarly disposed of; he was compelled to give up his wife, to which he agreed. Another native “experienced and apt, to all appearances . . . said he wanted to be free along with his wife;” when Rojas, “knowing that she was old and intractable (one old Indian woman does more damage and destruction than many men no matter how bad!)” agreed to free him but not her, he disappeared “when he understood what was said, and did not again ask for liberty.” Three other men who had come into Bayamo vanished “when they learned the conditions.” These details suggest a drama full of bitter tragedy. One Alonso Cabezas, native of Santo Domingo, who had entirely proved his capacity to maintain himself by doing so on wages, was nevertheless with his duly wedded wife, committed to the village “because association with him would benefit the rest . . . and he was satisfied” with the decision. It does not appear that any who solicited freedom actually obtained anything approaching it, as the old Cubeños,—still intractable!—had known it when they fished and hunted and tilled the soil at their own good pleasure for their own benefit, and danced away the plentiful leisure that they loved.

Doubtless Rojas had done his best, according to his light, yet the settlement he made of the whole matter of "the experiment" satisfied few. Among the lot assigned to Vergara was a *cacique* called Anaya and his wife whose daughter remained in the village. They sought to get her away secretly, and failing, they hung her and themselves in the bush to which apparently they had fled. The people of Bayamo were not satisfied because they claimed that Vergara being their *procurador* to obtain these natives in *encomienda* for them had played them false and got them for himself. That he was a newcomer, a single man engaged in trade with Tierra Firme, aggravated the case. His acquisition of over thirty *encomendados* gave him more than any of the old settlers with two exceptions. In fact, six or seven *vecinos* together had not so many now as he. Rojas himself could not "before God and his conscience" report on the matter in any sense except unfavorably because he felt and believed that without strict supervision to compel them to work the natives would not of their own free will accomplish anything "although it may well be that some few may arrive safely in port. And this I say," he added, "because five years now, and more, have passed in this experiment and in the four years that I have had charge I have many times looked into and considered their affairs and I cannot discover more benefit the last year than the first. Before God and on my conscience it seems to me that it would be wiser to order them commended to some resident (of Bayamo)," provision being made that any who on their own initiative asked freedom and seemed fit for it should be granted it for a year in which time they were to prove their capacity.

If they failed to prove it they were to be "recommended." Speaking generally Rojas had lost what hope he seemed in an earlier day to have that Cubeños might accomplish anything save by compulsion. The crown approved, for the time being, all that Rojas had done with respect to the natives.

## CHAPTER X

### THE LURE OF FLORIDA (TO 1543)

*Esta tierra se va acabando.*—Lope Hurtado, 54-1-34.

. . . *Esta ysla esta muy dispoyeda y muy huera de quien por ella haga y si vuestra Magestad no la remedie ella va muy perdida y la perdicion della es que el gobernador Hernando de Soto se yra a su conquista de la Florida y procurara sacar todos los espanoles que mas provechosos son para sostener esta ysla en paz.*—*Documentos Ineditos*, 2nd Series, Vol. II, p. 39.

Now old actors were given one last turn upon Cuba's stage, and then swept unceremoniously to their exit as Time gave their cue to new, romantic, and adventurous characters in her drama.

Manuel de Rojas had just returned from a tour of inspection of the island which the law required him to make when, in August, 1534, Gonzalo de Guzman came back from Spain. Guzman's desire to see his affairs as Vadillo had left them referred to the council for the Indies in Spain rather than to the *audiencia* of Santo Domingo would indicate that he believed he had influence with that higher body and events justified his confidence, for he proved able to move the council very materially to lighten Vadillo's hearty condemnation of him, obtaining ameliorations or reversals of the *licenciado's* sentences. He had exchanged his packet of memorials and eulogies for as many royal *cedulas* of favorable tone and with them and with gifts for relatives and friends, with new furniture and silverware

for his house and new clothes for himself and his family, he came ashore "like the master of the island." Also he had in his pocket an appointment as governor of Cuba which had been sent to him while he was in Spain by the vireine, from Santo Domingo. The council for the Indies had objected to her choice but these objections had been overcome and through Juan de Samano, secretary, the council presently bade Guzman use that commission, admonishing him, however, to refrain from abusing his office by seeking to avenge himself upon his personal enemies.

Rojas seems to have been willing enough to deliver over the governorship, but the city council questioned whether or not to recognize the vireine's commission. When, however, a royal *cedula* was received in which Guzman was addressed as governor, Rojas held that to be sufficient evidence of the crown's intention and on October 28th, 1535, he gave over the office although not until the following December did royal order arrive that Guzman be received on the vireine's appointment.

Rojas had been repeatedly demanding that his *residencia* be taken and that he be relieved of an office which was both ungrateful and expensive. "Sacred majesty," he wrote, "my desire was never nor shall be, God willing, other than to serve your majesty with what I am and all that I possess, but I can no longer maintain myself because in addition to the expenses I incurred in the conquest of the rebel Indians under Guama(n) and in many other matters of the sort which presented themselves, I spent much in visiting the island, on which journey I was absent six months, and there is the ordinary expense I am under in this city (of

Santiago), which, being outside my own house, is great." He desired leave to go to Peru where he had a brother, Gabriel de Rojas, successful in business, and this, eventually, was granted but not until some years later after, for instance, he had served the crown in Jamaica in auditing accounts there, and in Cuba as special judge of cases involving the royal officials of the island and also Guzman with charges of fraud. There is record of Rojas in Peru; I have not found any indication that he ever returned to Cuba. I believe he died in Spain. Vadillo declared Manuel de Rojas was "wise, upright, well-intentioned, and made peace among the people like a good judge." That a man of these qualities, distinguishable through all that he wrote and all that he did, should have found it advisable to abandon Cuba in his old age and after long years of most commendable public activity, is a commentary upon the gratitude of princes: "We will remember your services," the crown responded to Rojas' plea for release from office, which brief words seem to have been the extent of his reward. His departure is also the strongest possible commentary upon the character of Gonzalo de Guzman and of his administrations, for unquestionably Guzman's presence in the island and in office augmented Rojas' determination to betake himself to distant Peru.

Indeed, Guzman's return created consternation throughout the colony. Pedro de Paz, the accountant, with all his family, removed to Spain in March, 1535, leaving his office with Gonzalo de Medina, whom Hurtado characterized as capable but crooked. Guzman lamented his departure, evidently regretting to see Paz so escape his ability to annoy. Paz was reported to the crown to be very ill when he arrived in Seville in the

following May, and presently he died, leaving considerable property to his children and to his widow, Doña Guiomar de Guzman, a sister, I think, of Gonzalo de Guzman, who did certainly demonstrate in later years that she had all the Guzman disposition, which was, however, at the present juncture best displayed by Gonzalo himself. Other persons who were out of his favor hastened to remove themselves beyond his reach.

Now suddenly a very important change in the island's affairs occurred, as a stroke of lightning: the cardinal of Siguenza made his decision in a certain law suit between the heirs of Columbus and the crown, and Luis Colon renounced to the crown rights (which he had claimed by virtue of agreements and privileges) and all exercise of jurisdiction over the island of Cuba. Those officials in Cuba,—the governor and sheriffs,—whose authority emanated from Colon were instructed to resign to the municipal councils. These were commanded to elect two *alcaldes* yearly in whom was to vest such judicial authority in first instance, civil and criminal, as formerly appertained to the governorship; appeal was to the *audiencia*. No *alcalde* was eligible to immediate reëlection; royal officials were ineligible to be *alcaldes*. *Cedula* to this effect was obeyed in Cuba on March 20th, 1537, when Guzman and the sheriff and the clerk *de juzgado* resigned accordingly. There was no indication that the crown intended to appoint a governor.

In reporting this change of government to the crown the city council protested that a governor "or judicial head" of the colony should be designated. Given the requirements of eligibility to the office of *alcalde*,—that is, two years' lapse of time between expiration of term

and reëlection to the office, royal officials and their substitutes being ineligible,—“there are lacking,” the council said, “honorable persons” to be so chosen. Not more than four or five in town were suitable for the position. The council requested that a return be made to the old law whereby the council chose the *alcaldes*: the council, that body assured the crown, could be relied upon to select proper incumbents. The “pot luck” system of election had not always done so, or so Guzman at least had previously remarked. The popular choice, he objected, being unduly influenced, preferred “the tailor and the butcher,” and other persons of such quality that it was prejudicial to their betters to be commanded by them. When, however, Guzman and the council had urged that this unusual democratic method of election (in vogue in no other colony, they said) be abandoned, the crown contented itself with bidding them report on the point in detail,—after they had called the people together and publicly consulted with them. I have found no record of any such conference. There was, however, issued a *cedula* providing that a candidate to the office of *alcalde* must be “honorable,” competent, and know how to read and write. *Alcaldes* holding office for the limited term of a year would not, the council feared, take the welfare of the island and the crown thoroughly to heart; moreover, no *residencia* hanging over them, they might prove tyrannical. Appeal from the *alcaldes* to the *audiencia* entailed in minor cases prohibitive expense and detrimental delay. It was mildly intimated that in providing for the good of his service the king might well continue Guzman in the governorship.

However, there having appeared at court “Captain

Soto of Peru, . . . a rich man," anxious to continue in adventures of conquest and said to be well able to indulge himself in that direction, he was made governor of Cuba (May 4th, 1537),—the first to be directly commissioned by the crown. The intention was that he make the island his base of operations against Florida.

For twenty years Florida had been Pandora's box to the Spaniards,—an unknown country which, especially after the amazing conquest of Mexico, it was anticipated would be found to contain incomparable treasure. Ponce de Leon was beaten back to Havana from its inhospitable coasts, wounded to the death. Lucas Vazquez de Ayllon found his grave "in the sea to which their fate consigned so many other captains and governors, before and after the *Licenciado* Ayllon, and this was the end of his administration in Florida." Panfilo de Narvaez, returning minus an eye from his encounter with Cortes in Mexico, found that his faithful wife, Maria de Valenzuela, with whom he had left his estate at Bayamo, had proven a profitable administrator. On her savings he betook himself to court (1526–27) where he procured appointment as *adelantado* and governor of that same Florida of which marvels were still expected. His expedition cleared from Sant Lucar, tarried a month in Santo Domingo for horses where a hundred and forty of his men deserted him (all this according to the historian Oviedo), evidently believing the prospects brighter to west and south than the experience of Ponce and Ayllon and wandering traders like Miruelo had proven them to be to the northwest. From Santo Domingo Narvaez came on, to Cuba. A hurricane which in October, 1527, amid wide damage levelled the little settlement of Trinidad, wrecked two

of his half dozen ships on the south coast of the island. Narvaez himself with the rest seems to have ridden out the storm in Santiago's sheltered harbor. Sixty men and twenty horses were drowned in this catastrophe. The expedition wintered at Xagua, Guzman the governor and especially Vasco Porcallo assisting Narvaez to recuperate. In February, it seems, of 1528, he set out from Xagua for Florida, having enlisted some men to replace those who deserted in La Española; because there was a feeling that this expedition was ill-starred there was no stampede in Cuba to Narvaez's banner. In 1535 his treasurer, Alvar Nuñez Cabeza de Vaca, two other Spaniards and a negro, made their way into the Spanish settlements at Panuco: they were all that remained alive of Narvaez's band. Their odyssey made them the first explorers of territory which is now southwestern United States and Mexico. Their *adelantado* and governor got not so far: the last they saw of him he was in a small boat with a pilot named Anton Perez and a page of his named Campo (he was thin and sick and full of scurvy),—night settled down, a heavy north wind blew, and in the morning there was nothing to be seen of that wretched trio. "May God in his infinite mercy have pardoned Narvaez's soul, against his sins offsetting what he suffered and his cruel death." His industrious widow, Maria de Valenzuela, in vain sent caravels to his relief. Hernando de Caballos to whom she entrusted them seems to have betrayed her interests, for a price ceasing to prosecute her law suits against Narvaez's enemies in Mexico and there selling her caravels. Her suits-at-law against this faithless agent pursued him to Spain, where, it is pleasant to learn, he was at one time "a prisoner in chains." To console

her, Narvaez's widow possessed at least one son, Diego de Narvaez who, when de Soto set out upon the road his father had travelled, was apparently in Mexico pressing the law suits Caballos had compromised.

Alvar Nuñez Cabeza de Vaca told his story of hardship at the Spanish court in 1537; he added, however, that among the Florida Indians he had seen precious metals and emeralds. He himself evidently retained no desire to investigate into the origin of these, for the rest of his history lies in South America; but there were enough others who, knowing less of Florida and its inhabitants than he, became eager to try their hand at its stubborn conquest when they heard the provisions of de Soto's appointment to undertake that enterprise.

These provisions, which dealt definitely with gold and silver and pearls and precious stones, were enough to fire the rapacity of any Spaniard and render him totally oblivious of fact. The Inca in his "Florida" tells how when these provisions were made public throughout the peninsula all the talk was of the new undertaking,—that Hernando de Soto was off to win great kingdoms and provinces for the crown of Spain. After Mexico, Peru had yielded to its conquerors superb spoils,—spoils in quantity and value almost beyond belief,—and a hundred thousand ducats were the share in it which fell to Hernando de Soto as a principal captain in the emprise; he had been Pizarro's lieutenant governor at Cuzco. This sum included what the Indians of that city presented to him when he and Pedro del Barco, alone, went into the capital, and what the king Atahuallpa gave to him: Atahuallpa was fond of de Soto because he was the first Spaniard he met and talked with. With this fortune de Soto returned from

Peru to Spain and although he might have bought with it an estate and corresponding position in his native province (of Villanueva de Barcarota) he did not care to do so; instead, animated by recollection of his adventures in Peru he desired to undertake others as great or greater, if greater there might be, and therefore he went to Valladolid where the court was and asked commission of the crown to conquer the kingdom of Florida, all at his own expense and risk. When it was everywhere known that Captain de Soto was not content with the hundred thousand ducats he had got out of Peru but was spending it all on this other expedition, every one marvelled and concluded that the new undertaking must be a greater and richer adventure than the preceding had been: therefore from all parts of Spain many gentlemen of illustrious lineage, many nobles, many experienced soldiers who had served the Spanish crown in various parts of both the Old World and the new, many simple citizens and even laborers, flocked to join his standard at Sant Lucar de Barrameda. With hopes set on obtaining the gold and the silver and the priceless gems de Soto's commission enumerated, with knowledge that Mexico and Peru had yielded just such profits by the boatload,—and utterly heedless that Florida had so far done nothing whatsoever of the sort,—they sold their properties, abandoned parents, relatives and friends, and offered themselves for the expedition.

De Soto meanwhile had selected officers to serve under him and every man worked bravely at his particular task. Ships had been purchased and partially provisioned; arms and munitions had been bought, and men enlisted. On April 6th, 1538, the expedition

sailed away from Sant Lucar,—the most brilliant and probably the best equipped that ever cleared from Spain, and destined to as dire disaster as ever befell any brave company.

The *adelantado* and his wife, the Lady Isabel de Bobadilla (daughter of Pedro de Arias under whom “without anything else of his own, save his sword and target,” de Soto set out to find his fortune in the New World) with all their household, including three white slave women, were aboard the San Cristobal, flagship not only of de Soto’s own fleet but also of a fleet of merchantmen bound for Mexico which travelled with him almost as far as Cuba. They put in at La Gomera, an island of the Canaries, where the Count de Gomera received them with festivities. When they departed they carried with them a daughter of the count’s, the Lady Leonor de Bobadilla, seventeen years old and exceedingly lovely, whom de Soto had begged her father to permit to accompany her aunt, the Lady Isabel. He promised to see Doña Leonor married, to make her a great lady during the conquest he was commencing, and the count consented, relying on de Soto’s magnanimity, certain that he would do even more than he offered. En route de Soto’s second in command, Captain Nuño de Tobar, won her; he was dismissed from his post when de Soto discovered that on arriving in Santiago the pair married secretly. Since history seems to be silent thereafter concerning Captain Nuño de Tobar and the Lady Leonor we are free to imagine that they lived happy ever afterwards, counting all the treasures of the kingdom of Florida which they might have had, well lost for love.

De Soto’s fleet appeared off Santiago early in June,

1538. The entrance to that harbor is narrow. On the right of ships seeking entrance is a steep and rocky headland the heights of which dominate the navigable channel: here Vadillo had built a watchtower. On the left the land lies lower. The channel turns to the right around a small rocky inlet now called Smith's Key, to the left of which are dangerous shallows. This, however, was unknown to de Soto's ships, inexperienced in these seas, so as they neared land and a man on horseback signalled them from the height to bear to the left they obeyed; but when they came near enough for him to realize that they were friends, not enemy ships as he had supposed, he began to yell orders to the contrary: "Port your helm or you are wrecked!" They did so, but de Soto's flagship brought up with a bang on Smith's Key nevertheless. There was an awful crash below and the pumps began to bring up water and vinegar and wine and honey. Small boats were lowered away and the Lady Isabel and her household were set ashore but not before some young gentlemen not accustomed to dangers at sea had disgraced themselves by piling into boats ahead of the women, "considering it no time for gallantry." De Soto himself would not abandon the vessel until it should be necessary. It did not become so, for when sailors investigated they found the total damage was broken bottles which poured their contents within the pumps' reach. The ship itself remained sound, and those who had forsaken it in all haste became the butt of their companions' ridicule. De Soto landed at Santiago on June 7th (or 9th), 1538, and was by the council received as governor. His six hundred or so men were quartered on the *vecinos*.

At about the same time there arrived, too, Bishop Don Fray Diego Sarmiento, succeeding Ramirez, deceased. He came assured of a thousand ducats a year salary (the crown making up any deficit between his share of the tithes and this amount); and with permission to bring six slaves with him, to enter goods free of duty, and to enjoy possession of twenty Indian *encomendados* for his personal service and the church's.

The city extended the new governor and the new bishop the best welcome of which it was capable, making what poor show of festival its few and humble citizens could display. There were, the Inca says, dances and masques at night, and bull-fights and horse-races by day, but there were no joustings nor attempts at tournament for no equipment therefor was available. To those who excelled in skill at arms or in riding, or in composition of poetry for the occasion, or in elegance of attire, prizes of jewels of gold and silver, silks and brocades were awarded. To witness these events the principal colonists of the island came into Santiago, bringing with them their fleetest and finest horses. De Soto and his officers possessed themselves of many of these animals: they were necessary to their plans with respect to Florida.

Among the settlers who appeared on this occasion was Vasco Porcallo de Figueroa, whom Velazquez had established twenty-five years before in Camaguey. There he had made himself rich, in lands and cattle and servitors; and he had made himself feared through the middle of the island by acts of barbarous cruelty. He was dazzled by de Soto's magnificence (to which he added by princely gifts of horses) and when it was offered him he proudly accepted Nuño de Tobar's post

as second in command of the expedition to Florida. In August, 1538, de Soto sent his household and his infantry to Havana via the north coast in the five ships which now constituted his fleet. He and the cavalry followed overland in detachments, and Vasco Porcallo rode with the *adelantado*, aiding him not a little,—materially from means at his command, and morally by his corresponding influence throughout the island. Santiago saw them go with greater pleasure than she had seen de Soto come.

From Havana where de Soto and all his expedition met by Christmas of 1538, he despatched Juan de Anasco and fifty men to reconnoitre the Florida coast and locate a port suitable for the landing of his expedition. In two months Anasco returned, without satisfactory information. He went back and reappeared in three months. He and his men had come near death: the Inca says that in response to a vow made in extremity they sought Havana's church on their knees from the wharf, and thanked the Virgin and their saints for delivery, even before they reported to the governor. Espiritu Santo bay (which still bears the name they gave it) was selected for the expedition's landing place, and in late May, 1539, de Soto cleared from Havana for that point with nine ships, 237 horses and 513 men, not including seamen. He was fully supplied with provisions,—*cazabi* bread, corn and beef on the hoof,—and he left all arranged for the forwarding of more of the same, especially from estates he had bought for the purpose. In July, 1539, having landed him in safety, six of his ships came back to Havana, to the order of his wife, the Lady Isabel, whom he left in charge as acting governor over the

island of Cuba with Juan de Rojas as her lieutenant in Havana.

Presently, Vasco Porcallo came home: pitched from his horse headlong into a swamp, he decided that Camaguey was the place for an old man, and thither he returned, leaving a sullen half-breed son of his to serve valiantly in his stead. Gomez Arias came, with reports of the excellence of Florida for the Lady Isabel, and all Cuba was called upon to render solemn thanks for the prosperity of the expedition. Toward the end of February, 1540, Diego Maldonado put into Havana with de Soto's orders to meet him again, in a given Florida port, in the following October with reinforcements of men, arms, munitions, and food supplies.

While he and others worked on de Soto's orders, draining the island of Cuba weaker yet of provisions and horses and men, to fill eight good ships for his reinforcement, with which they presently sailed away to the Florida coast, the Cubeños, dancing after their tribal custom through long noisy nights, sang that Spanish domination in Cuba was near its end since only the infirm and the spiritless were left in the land.

De Soto did not appear at the Florida port where he had bidden Gomez Arias and Diego Maldonado to rejoin him in October of 1540. They waited long at the rendezvous and then returned to Havana to carry to the Lady Isabel the ominous news that he had not joined them there. Next year and the year after and again the year after that (1543), those two "good and loyal gentlemen" searched the gulf coast from the Florida peninsula to Vera Cruz, leaving messages carved in trees, hiding them in recesses, hiring Indians to carry letters inland; it did not seem possible that so big and

brave a company should have perished, leaving not a vestige.

Not until the month of October, 1543, were tidings received. Three hundred of de Soto's men had reached the Spanish settlements of Panuco, but their leader lay behind them, sunk beneath the dark waters of a great river he had discovered. Maldonado and Gomez Arias brought this news to the faithful Lady Isabel: to the ruin of his fortune, wreck of his estate and loss of honors, she saw added the certainty of de Soto's death. Rough old Vasco Porcallo came up from Camaguey to comfort her. Early chroniclers say she died of a broken heart: but unpoetic documents prove that she lived for many years longer to prosecute in Spain certain curious law suits against Hernan Ponce with whom de Soto had a lifehold "universal" partnership in all things.

## CHAPTER XI

### EBB TIDE,—ORTIZ, DE AVILA, CHAVES (1538–1550)

*Es la verdad todos estan fatigados de infortunios y trabajos que (les) han venido.*—Gonzalo de Guzman, 54–1–34.

De Soto in departing left Cuba to sink into depths of neglect. The administrations of his *alcalde mayor* Bartolome Ortiz, and of the governors *Lic.* Juanes de Avila and *Lic.* Antonio Chaves, mark low water in the island's affairs. The most obvious matter of interest in these years was the struggle of the crown to set the natives free in fact; the colonists, laboring to circumvent this policy, won the governors over to disobedience of the royal commands.

Documents at Seville for this period are neither as numerous nor as consecutive as might be desired.

Quite frankly both the crown and de Soto intended that Cuba should be the base for operations of the campaign against Florida which his expedition constituted. In de Soto's commission as governor of the island it was provided that he might delegate his duties as such to an *alcalde mayor*, for whom a salary of 200 *pesos* a year payable from Cuban revenues was provided. De Soto's own salary of 500 ducats as governor of Cuba (this was the first time the office carried any stipend) was made payable from those funds it was anticipated would accrue from Florida.

In May preceding de Soto's landing Baracoa had been burned by *cimarrones* (wild Indians) who expected the peaceful *encomendados* of the locality to rise and join them; instead forty of these latter went out against the rebels to fight them but would consent to no Spaniard accompanying their war party. When de Soto arrived the city council of Santiago had squads of men in the field against the rebels. The council had already asked Spain for fifty crossbows which the crown ordered sent with the understanding that the settlers would pay for them. De Soto evidently approved of the council's activities against the natives for he immediately sent still more men (white, black and red) from Santiago and from Bayamo, against them, at the expense of a tax "for defence against rebels, wild Indians and against the French" levied, I believe on merchandise imported. The crown approved this tax and even permitted it to be increased. It was doubtless due to his encouragement that the colony repeated its request for arms and munitions up to a total of 50,000 *marañedes*: the crown ordered them sent provided that the settlers paid for them. The crown expressed displeasure that the natives in uprising should have interfered with mining and in authorizing the raising of campaign funds by taxation, sanctioned such warfare on *cimarrones* as should end disorder. No sooner had de Soto left the east end of the island, sweeping the country clean of fighting men as he went, than the natives of that section renewed their revolt. They again threatened Baracoa. Bartolome Ortiz (de Soto's *alcalde mayor*) sent inadequate reinforcements to that settlement's relief: their guides massacred the soldiers. The citizens of Santiago and Bayamo refused to furnish

Cubeños to help put down the revolt. Ortiz's only recourse was to complain to the *audiencia* of Santo Domingo. It appears that negroes joined in the revolt. The absence of Vasco Porcallo and of others of his sort who had gone with de Soto encouraged the Cubeños of the center of the island to rise. Guzman informed the crown that dread of that one man had held them under and in removing him de Soto had done the country serious damage. The former governor drew a picture of the situation which was black indeed, declaring that two-thirds of the island were unpopulated and most of the central settlements "as good as burned." Two natives in arms, he said, were enough to massacre all the Spaniards who were left! The colonists desired permission to continue to tax themselves for campaign funds and authority to compel *vecinos* to lend Cubeños and negroes to fight whenever necessary.

Hurtado, who appears stalking through these years with two armed negroes as bodyguard,—Castro and Guzman (still a "servant of the crown" because he retained the office of *veedor* of the *fundicion*), others they involved and Bishop Sarmiento continued to revolve in Santiago's atmosphere of disturbance on which these rare old belligerents appear to have thrived. Sarmiento, who, Hurtado declared, had "arrived raging," adding that all priests on passing west of Gomera dropped their good character into the seas there and became devils a month after landing in Cuba, was Ramirez's successor indeed and espoused his quarrels; so also he was much concerned as to his tithes and he wanted them paid in hard money rather than in kind. Being inquisitor, Hurtado said, he was master of the colony, including the women. He was at odds with the monks

of the Franciscan monastery which, suggested by 1527, had since 1530 existed precariously in Santiago,—a *bohio* (hut) now inhabited by young friars whose conduct scandalized the community, now abandoned altogether, and now resumed, the crown contributing (1536) toward the erection of a more substantial edifice.

The *alcalde mayor*, Bartolome Ortiz, called upon to settle old feuds was swamped in difficulties. He and the settlers in their warring parties fell out concerning the fort which de Soto had begun to guard the landing place, if that earthwork was pretentious enough to be considered a fort. They quarrelled over its site and construction. Even before de Soto arrived the city council had begged the crown for skilled men to build it and for artillery. Surely, the *cabildo* exclaimed, voicing the city's real fear, God would not let His church there be burned with the stone houses that had cost so much (and so many *cedulas!*) to build which if destroyed would not be reërected in a very long time indeed! It was understood that Havana was to have a fort of masonry; Santiago asked that hers be built as durably, since the settlement of Santiago, its council added, with a pride which had as yet no appreciation that the star of empire was passing west,—Santiago was "what is to last in this island." Work on the fort stopped for lack of funds (perhaps before it began), and not until the *audiencia* at Santo Domingo authorized expenditure of money on it was it finished in February of 1544. News of the sack of Santa Marta and of Cartagena by the French stimulated the people of Santiago to take renewed interest in the matter. Though the crown seems to have anticipated that the fort would be built at the harbor's mouth I am under the impression

that what was constructed was a bulwark at the landing, in which artillery was duly placed.

Ortiz was an infirm old man. His salary of 200 *pesos* a year was inadequate remuneration for what he endured in Santiago, between the fighting factions which had nothing in common save their animosity to him. Ortiz earnestly desired to resign and presently (1542) with the crown's permission he withdrew to Spain.

On August 14th, 1543, the crown appointed *Lic.* Juanes de Avila to be governor of Cuba, nothing whatsoever having been heard from de Soto in Florida for three years. Juanes de Avila was a young man,—under thirty. I have seen no documents to explain his selection. He was slow to go to his post and was at one time bidden to return his commission, Seville being instructed not to let him depart. Whether he had previous history, or connections of note, or not, he was, nevertheless, a governor royally appointed, and when eventually he came, Cuba, which had resented being administered by a mere *alcalde mayor*, thanked the king for him: "We had ceased to hope for such succor, believing that your majesty had forgotten this, your island."

De Avila arrived at Santiago on February 2, 1544. A storm holding his ship off port, he came ashore in a jollyboat lest he be carried on to an easier landing in Mexico. He passed the population in review and counted, he says, 200 Christians, foot and horse. He at once took de Soto's *residencia*, and those of his subordinate officials. This investigation was little more than a formality.

De Avila took up his residence with Doña Guiomar de Guzman. Doña Guiomar was over fifty years of age.

She was that widow whom Pedro de Paz, former accountant, had left well off in *encomiendas* and other property. She had daughters and a son,—Pedro de Paz, 2nd, who seems to have been a rake of a Salamanca student,—and with him especially she became involved in law suits concerning partition of the estate. Although there is evidence that in Spain before 1540 Doña Guiomar married Sebastian del Oyo Villota, *vecino* of Seville, it seems to have been rather as a buxom widow that, in the summer of 1541, she entertained the Admiral Luis de Colon at her house. The admiral was flat broke and ill to boot and possibly was willing to share in any material profit Doña Guiomar may have been able to make out of having so influential a guest in her house and under her domination. Contemporary gossip ran that she was de Avila's mistress before the young governor made her his wife. He had previously expressed a willingness to espouse any one of half a dozen young ladies in La Española, who, unfortunately for him, preferred sugar planters there or in default of these then nobles of Spain to governors of Cuba. "He was as blind in his own business," Castro exclaimed, in commenting upon his wedding to the widow, "as he has been to the interests of everybody except Doña Guiomar."

The crown was again endeavoring to free the Cubanos from the *repartimiento* system. A *cedula* arrived in Santiago forbidding the use of natives in mining; by this time they were employed in little else. The local authorities failed to have it cried, and therefore it was not enforced. Castro and Agramonte were especially blamed for this. Called to account in the matter these authorities protested that to publish and

make effective that order was to ruin the island utterly. Bishop Sarmiento had been made protector of the Indians: the city council had protested his appointment, violent scenes ensued,—an armed conflict in the *plaza*,—and there is no evidence that the natives benefited. The number of those in the “experiment” village had dwindled to ten, in the control of a *vecino* who hired them out; they were said to have earned sixty *pesos* a year out of which that *vecino* paid their poll tax of three *pesos* per capita and pocketed the other half of the sixty. More *cedulas* were emitted,—that the Cubeños be well treated and *naborias* allowed liberty to choose whom they would serve. The crown’s desire to give the natives liberty was overruled in the council for the Indies (April 20, 1543) and accepting a majority report in the matter the king agreed “to send a governor to act with the church and report on the manner of granting liberty judiciously, to the Indians’ advantage.” Juanes de Avila was accordingly equipped with “judicious” *cedulas*: Indian slaves taken by force elsewhere and sold in Cuba were to be returned to their native habitats; to hold or to import such slaves was made illegal, governor and bishop were once more declared ineligible to hold *encomendados* (the prohibition included minor secular and ecclesiastical functionaries and religious communities); individual colonists were not to be deprived of their *encomiendas* but these ceased to be heritable; Cubeños held by negligent and unworthy Spaniards were to be released from such service at once; natives were not to be forced to do work they did not choose to do,—except in case of necessity and then for a proper wage! De Avila had these provisions cried and a storm of protest broke. *Procuradores*,

councils, *alcaldes*,—and doubtless also his wife who held large *encomiendas*,—pleaded with the governor to suspend execution of these orders, at least until the end of the year 1544, which would give them time to appeal. De Avila acceded, later claiming in his defence that he had the *audiencia's* authority to delay; but that he failed to free the natives was held as a heavy count against him when his administration was investigated. His brother, Alonso de Avila was empowered (March 25, 1544) by the *procuradores* of the colony to enter its protests at court; it may be that other advocates, too, were sent.

From Santiago the governor presently set out for a tour of inspection of the island with Havana as his ultimate destination. Declaring that presence of French corsairs on the seas made it necessary for him to remain to defend that port and its shipping, he had a house built for himself on ground the city ceded for the purpose and with materials some said the residents of Havana contributed under compulsion,—wherefore they called the governor's residence "the house of fear." When the danger from the French passed, de Avila said, he returned to Santiago.

Documents I have seen give the impression that de Avila was as worthless a governor as the island ever drew to its unhappy lot. He favored his wife, engaged in trade himself and created monopolies for his own benefit, coerced the municipal councils, intimidated the people, and accepted bribes. His ill fame was common gossip in La Española and the *audiencia* sent *Lic.* Estevez as *juez de comision* to investigate into his conduct in office. Meanwhile, the crown, informed of his excesses, on October 5th, 1545, commissioned *Lic.*

Antonio Chaves to succeed him as governor. Chaves' appointment was for four years at 1000 ducats a year salary.

He arrived in Santiago on June 4, 1546, took office next day and proceeded to put de Avila through a regular *residencia* regardless of Estevez's work, suspecting Estevez, possibly, of partiality toward de Avila. A glance into the half dozen or so great volumes of legal documents accumulated in the course of these two investigations shows the governor's house raided, Doña Guiomar resisting; a slave woman threatened with torture (in the presence of Chaves himself) to compel her to disclose where de Avila and his wife hid their treasures, the dirt floor of a country house dug up to discover bars of gold there, the former governor a prisoner and chained to the stocks where slaves were held, next seeking sanctuary in the Franciscan monastery, from there fleeing to the woods where he was ingloriously captured and, finally, sailing away to Spain accompanied by the evidence for and against him, there to face the council for the Indies. Fortunately, he was also accompanied by a box of treasure; it lightened judgment on him. Doña Guiomar, fond spouse that she may have been, now came forward to fight off fines imposed on Juanes by claiming that all the property in sight was hers, not de Avila's. The legal battles they waged lasted for years; finally, however, documents show de Avila freed from jail and, no longer banished from the Indies as he was among first sentences passed on him, he returned with his wife and a retinue of fifteen servants to prosecute as a trader the business between Cuba and the continent in which the doughty widow Guiomar was long and

profitably engaged. Before 1563 Juanes had died possibly in Jamaica.

When Chaves took office even the natives were said to rejoice in the relief from de Avila. It does not appear that they had good cause, for Chaves deplored the royal *cedula* prohibiting the employment of Cubeños in mining, declared that it and discord among the leading colonists as result of which traders suffered and therefore avoided the island, were chief causes of the colony's deplorable condition, and, protesting that he intended to enforce it, Chaves "suspended the effect" of the order and urged the crown to revoke it, lest the island be depopulated "and the devil possess it again." The king's answer was a reprimand, and on September 27, 1547, Chaves assured him that his command was obeyed; but he asked that exemption be made of Puerto Principe and Sancti Spiritus, and of Trinidad which he had reestablished, because, he explained, they had no agricultural resources and this prohibition against employing the Cubeños in mining meant their obliteration. Chaves was not disposed to grant the natives liberty; they were lacking, he said, in knowledge of Christian doctrine and he argued that temporal freedom meant spiritual damnation for them. He therefore, he reported, gave them freedom in name only, made their obligations domestic service solely, and forbade contracts and transfers. He asked the crown's approval of this modification of the royal command, and received only censure. It was also charged against him that he did not enforce *cedulas* to prohibit traffic in Indian slaves.

Guzman was long since dead (1539) and Castro followed him in 1547: nevertheless peace by no means

prevailed in Santiago, for Hurtado was still there,—still “bestirring himself on behalf of the king’s patrimony,”—and it was on his accusations that Chaves mistreated settlers by word and deed, defamed and solicited their women, attended to his own private business in preference to the colony’s, permitted his under-officials to overcharge, and shielded delinquents from justice, that the *audiencia* of Santo Domingo on January 16, 1549, commissioned Captain Geronimo de Aguayo(s) *juez perquisidor* to make a secret investigation into the governor’s conduct. Hurtado undertook to pay this judge’s salary. On April 8th following Captain Aguayo presented himself in Santiago. Chaves was in Havana. By July Aguayo had returned to Santo Domingo with a list of 300 charges against the governor. That court was then expecting Chaves’ successor—Dr. Gonzalo Perez de Angulo—to arrive momentarily, and when he passed through Santo Domingo the results of Aguayo’s work were delivered to him. Chaves declared that Aguayo was a nephew of *Lic.* Grajeda of the *audiencia* who merely needed the salary which he drew as *juez perquisidor*, and that since he had hopes of obtaining the governorship for himself he exerted every effort to prove Chaves as black as his worst enemies painted him.

Dr. Angulo, appointed September 1, 1548, arrived in Santiago on November 4, 1549, and accepted Aguayo’s work, or so Chaves alleged, as the basis of the *residencia* he took. On July 1, 1550, he sent Chaves a prisoner to Spain accused of a multitude of petty misdemeanors: that he haled a priest who had been disrespectful to him, through the streets of town half-dressed at night, that he failed to pay for a dose of

zarzaprilla at the apothecary's, that he called Hurtado's nephew a Jew,—a libel that gentleman took long depositions to prove false! He was said to have called the colonists conspirators and to have declared that rebellion such as the *Lic.* Gasca was then smothering in Peru was likely to break out in Cuba: in his defence Chaves asserted that he had grounds for making such remarks. "I was right," he stoutly maintained, "to reprove such leagues as are common in Indies against judges who are unpopular because they will not do as the provincials desire." Of serious charges of failure to enforce *cedulas* concerning natives, the council for the Indies absolved Chaves on the ground that execution of these had been ordered suspended: actually, it would seem that between *cedulas* to give them liberty, governors' suspension of these, the secreting of some orders and the *audiencia's* interference with others, the whole matter was a muddle which justified, for instance, Castro's assertion that nobody knew what the law was.

Nevertheless, Chaves was long held in prison, actually in chains. In view of the comparative triviality of the counts against him, the only explanation is that he had not during his administration accumulated the means wherewith to purchase lenient if not favorable consideration of it! He was early deserted by his lawyer and thereafter conducted his own defence and acted as his own clerk. Not until June, 1552, had he worried the sentences against him down to a fine of 104,000 *maravedis* payable in a year.

Who reads the petitions, one after another, which Chaves submitted asking release from confinement, if only for a few days because he was ill, and who reads

his pleas that he be freed to earn in Cuba or in Peru the wherewithal to settle the account against him, may picture him as the personification of the humiliation to which passing events had reduced the island of Cuba! One wonders that there were candidates willing to accept a governorship certain to involve the incumbent in bitter strife with a disobedient community and likely to entail an aftermath of imprisonment as long as the administration itself, costly, doubtless, to an equivalent at least of the legitimate profits the appointment carried.

Immediately on arriving in Cuba Governor Angulo proclaimed the "entire liberty" of the Cubeños. Inasmuch as the settlers had purchased what natives of the continent and of other islands they held as slaves, had paid duty on them and otherwise fulfilled all requirements of lawful acquisition and ownership, Angulo did not at the same time publish another *cedula* he had declaring these slaves, also, free. On the contrary, he suspended it and allowed the colonists to send Juan de Agramonte to court to protest against the injustice of it. This done, early in July, 1550,—as soon as he had settled with his predecessor Chaves,—Doctor Angulo betook himself to Havana.

From this time forward the natives cut little figure in the history of the island, although I have seen mention of an uprising in Angulo's time. Angulo's pronouncement that they were free seems to have had effect: in 1556 his successor, travelling through the country, said he found the Cubeños living wretchedly, abandoned to the wilderness. He estimated their number then and a little later to be not as many as two thousand, including perhaps two hundred Indians who were not

native born, but these had become so identified with the Cubeños through intermarriage that to send them back as the king desired to the regions whence they came would have been no kindness; the governor therefore ventured to disobey explicit instructions to do so, and was not rebuked. He ordered the natives to establish themselves in villages near the Spaniards' settlements, and so, he said, they did, willingly and quickly. I have seen no documents giving details of this matter. Over such villages (like Guanabacoa, near Havana, and El Caney near Santiago, and Trinidád itself) *alguaciles* named by royal appointment were placed in control; these officers were themselves Indians. It is possible that these villages were in some instances compelled "for the love of God" to support certain old and impecunious *conquistadores* for whom no other pension was available.

Cubeños came to own houses, crops and herds. They sold hides and provisions to passing ships. They engaged in trade with other colonies. The church, to be sure, profited by them under guise of administering to the spiritual welfare of their communities; similarly, ordinances supposedly framed to shield them against impositions in business, and to safeguard their morals (for instance by forbidding unrestricted sale of wine among them), were doubtless merely means of exploitation. Nevertheless, though they may have found that Juan de Rojas had an unfair monopoly of trade in Havana; and though the governor may have allowed Juan de Ynestrosa to compel them to bring up beef cattle for his meat market, they were withal no greater sufferers from such favoritism than Spaniards, and their complaints were of as much avail as any Chris-

tians'. The governor at least received their delegations, and the crown heard their complaints.

Some, however, refused to surrender to civilization. There were always red men among the outlaws who never came in from the inaccessible localities, especially, it would seem, about Puerto Principe and in the eastern end of the island, for it was in response to a petition from Santiago, Bayamo and Puerto Principe that in 1563 the crown consented to have them brought in by force of arms, the slaves among them to be punished with all the rigor of the law and the Cubeños to be taught the Catholic religion.

If any campaign was undertaken in consequence of this *cedula* it cannot have been entirely successful, for late in 1575 or early in 1576 Captain Cristobal de Soto Longó discovered a village of Cubeños, toward the south coast some forty miles from Havana, which had been theretofore entirely unknown to Spaniards. With the governor's consent he mustered and equipped a company of thirty or forty men and took this village of *macuriges* or *macunos* Indians, without bloodshed. He brought its chiefs before the governor to swear allegiance to Spain. They explained that the band, some sixty in number, was the offspring of two men and two women. The notary who talked with them in their own tongue testified that they said they were willing to come into a town, there to reside near the Spaniards. Although they are said to have selected the site for this village, there is reason to suppose that they were not unguided in the matter, for the place chosen seems to have been near enough to one of de Soto's ranches to make them available as labor. Captain Cristobal Soto Longó petitioned the king to

commend them to him and both the governor and the town council recommended him to royal favor for the service rendered in "pacifying" this native village. The king thanked him for bringing into his allegiance its inhabitants, "who were wandering in the wilderness without the light of the faith," but as to the *encomienda*, he hesitated. The *macuriges* deserted the new village shortly, but their patriarchal leader having died in the wilds to which they returned, fifty-one of them came back again and found places in Guanabacoa where, they were assured, they need serve nobody and pay no tribute. They were given a hundred yards of cloth to make themselves clothing and they were commended to the spiritual care of the village priest.

Their absorption into Guanabacoa would seem to end the tragedy of the Cubeño. He ceased to exist, except in a few Cubans, as a prototype of whom I might mention Captain Juan Ferrer de Vargas, who came up to Havana from Bayamo. Gossips said he was fetched to teach Governor Carreño's son the fine art of dancing at which perhaps it was his native blood which made him expert. His sister was Governor Montalvo's wife. Ferrer de Vargas was placed in command of Havana's fort. When jealousy objected that he was unfit for the honor because he was the son of a slave, the governor protested that his mother was a Cubeña and therefore a free woman by the king of Spain's repeated pronouncements, and that Ferrer de Vargas was a brave soldier with an honorable record in Spain as well as in Cuba, and this was indeed the fact. For mixed blood outside his own family, however, Governor Montalvo had less respect: when the Recio family waxed powerful he was not averse to referring

slightly to Juan Recio as a *mestizo*. Indian blood seems to have been considered a social detriment to those tinged by it; though it made their feet nimble in the dance it does not nevertheless appear to have at all detracted from their valor in the field of battle or from their astuteness in the no less heroic field of business.

## CHAPTER XII

### SOCIAL, AGRICULTURAL, INDUSTRIAL, AND COMMERCIAL DEVELOPMENT (TO 1550)

*Bien me ha parecido . . . que los españoles y naturales de esa tierra se den a la cultivar y sembrar en ella . . . y que haya en esa dicha tierra oficiales en todo lo mecanico.—The Crown. A de I., 87, 6, 1, III., CIVIII.*

As has been shown, from the year 1518 onward discovery and conquest and colonization tended steadily to draw population out of Cuba: to the west to Mexico and to Central America; then to the south beyond the isthmus to the most amazing kingdom of Peru; and now north, to Florida, as the Spaniards designated a continent of which nothing was known and everything anticipated. “Friends of change and novelty,” the colony’s settlers departed if they could, “leaving what they surely possessed and knew to go after untried uncertainties.” This, naturally, retarded economic development.

Santiago, capital of the colony, was described in de Soto’s time as a village of some twenty house-holders, twelve of them merchants. De Avila found “the Christians” to number 200 when he reviewed them on his arrival. The only public improvement the city boasted seems to have been a wharf beside which for its protection a bulwark was built and artillery planted. Although the crown appropriated funds to erect it of masonry, the *casa de fundicion* seems still to have been

the heretic Escalante's houses on which some money was spent to prevent them from falling in. What income the city had was from a tax on merchandise crossing the wharf, to which was now added that portion of *penas de camara* (fines) which it was authorized to expend. This money appears to have gone to pay *procuradores* and to fight Cubeños. Santiago had been more than once visited by fire. One conflagration destroyed the town hall and the original church; *circa* 1530 rebuilding of the latter began, of masonry and wood, the crown contributing toward the cost. The hospital and its chapel were *bohios*. So, too, had the Franciscan monastery and its hermitage been (1532), although the crown gave toward building the convent of stone as it gave toward erection of the cathedral. Many *cedulas* had been issued requiring *encomenderos* to build masonry houses in the towns,—substantial dwellings which should be safe against fire and against rebel natives and blacks,—yet nowhere save at Santiago where twelve or thirteen were begun perhaps by 1536 do documents indicate that stone buildings existed. Protests voiced there and from other settlements,—that materials and laborers were not available and that *encomenderos* would sooner surrender their natives than undergo the expense of complying,—suggest, however, that now serious attempts were made to enforce the law. In Santiago Guzman (1539) owned two masonry houses, in one of which he dwelt, wishing to God, he said, that he had contented himself with a hut, so fast on the road to perdition was the colony then travelling.

All the settlements shared in the general misery. Manuel de Rojas inspected the island in 1534. In order not to lose his pay Bishop Sarmiento visited the churches

of his diocese, travelling from Santiago to Havana whence he left for Spain in 1544. Governors de Avila, Chaves and Angulo called from settlement to settlement in their turn, and all left record of what they saw.

Baracoa, the oldest, was perhaps the most wretched of the seven towns Velazquez had founded. Though honored with the official title of city, it was "not even the shadow of a city nor yet of a small village." The eligible citizens were barely enough when Rojas was governor to fill the offices of *alcaldes* and *regidores*. Mustered all resources the place could barely support a *cura*. The causes of Baracoa's decay were then given as the pestilence which diminished the native population and the monopoly by non-resident *encomenderos* of those Cubeños who survived. After attempts at rebellion there which Rojas smothered, Baracoa seems almost to have ceased to exist; it was burned by French corsairs but presently it reappears, as headquarters for smugglers,—lawless friars who alone could be persuaded to be pastors to its sparse flock being picturesque active agents in this illegal business.

Bayamo became dissatisfied with its original location and moved, perhaps to its present site. In 1544 Bishop Sarmiento found a church, recently rebuilt there at an expenditure of 300 *pesos*, and a population of thirty Spaniards "married and about to marry," i. e., heads of families, and 400 Indians little inclined to the Catholic faith and careless as to whether they wore clothes or not, and some 200 negroes. Cattle raising was the leading industry, and it prospered especially until Mexico, a good customer for Cuban live stock, began to supply her own demand.

Trinidad had quarreled with its site, condemning its

port as poor and in ill-repute because of wrecks there. Guzman, Vadillo and Rojas in turn had dealt with the desire of its settlers to depart,—to Sancti Spiritus, to a pleasant place on the banks of the Arimao, to Peru or to the port of Matanzas to which harbor some did betake themselves with Vadillo's permission. In 1544 not a Spaniard remained at Trinidad, where, however, some Cubeños later appear supporting themselves by raising crops and exporting their surplus to Tierra Firme.

Sancti Spiritus in 1544 had a population of 18 *vecinos*, 58 *naborias encomendadas*, 14 negro and 50 Indian slaves. Rojas had opened a road from this settlement to the port of Puerto del Principe (presumably Nuevitas) to give egress to its products.

Puerto Principe, situated at this time on the north shore or near it, felt an impetus toward prosperity in its proximity to the north-coast trade route. In 1544 its population was 14 *vecinos*, 235 natives *encomendados* and 160 slaves who were blacks and Yucatan Indians. The building of a church had been begun with which Vasco Porcallo was helping.

Porcallo, according to Bishop Sarmiento, "first citizen of the island by right of lineage and wealth, . . . generous and spirited," did much to sustain the cities of Puerto Principe, where he was accustomed to spend part of each year, and Sancti Spiritus. His seat was at Sabana, a seaport fifty leagues away the identity of which I have not yet been able to establish to my own satisfaction, where he lorded it over a settlement of his own, of twenty huts, ten Spaniards (not including another ten who constituted his personal retinue), 80 natives and 120 negro slaves. Sabana, or "*el cayo*,"

as it is more frequently called, came with passing years to have a municipal organization of its own.

The population of Havana in 1544 was 40 *vecinos*, 120 Cubeños (*naborias*) and 200 black and Indian slaves. Or, as nearly as I can estimate it, the total population of Cuba at the middle of the sixteenth century was approximately 322 Spaniards (house-holders), say 1000 Cubeños, and perhaps 800 black and Indian slaves. I do not believe these figures to be accurate in the sense in which population is reckoned nowadays. Each house-holder (*vecino*), for instance, represented a more or less numerous family, and apparently no accounting was taken of transients, not even of traders regularly engaged in business to and from the island whose connection with the colony was more or less permanent. Therefore it is hardly safe to infer that the natives at this time (*circa* 1550) outnumbered the Caucasians three to one and that the slaves outnumbered their masters two to one.

Neither were the whites all Spaniards. Not only were there Germans at least in transit through Cuba (welcome everywhere because of their skill as artificers), but also Italians,—presently even among the soldiery on which the Spaniards relied for defence; other nationalities that flourished south of the Mediterranean were represented too, at least among the itinerant merchant-class. Portuguese, who appeared especially after 1528, were the agriculturists; industrious, they prospered and proved conducive to the prosperity of others about them. In 1531 at the request of the people of Cuba, because larger population of the island was desirable, the crown ordered that for six years married Portuguese be admitted to the colony on taking oath of allegiance

to Spain. Such immigrants were to be given a *caballeria* of land as a homestead. In 1536 it was ordered that any married Portuguese accompanied by his wife be let to go freely to the Indies. Certainly, Portuguese came into Cuba, cultivated its lands, and thrived. Later, their number caused alarm; their very virtues,—admirable qualities of intelligent laborious tillers of the soil,—constituted them a menace to Spaniards who lacked these characteristics.

To keep settlers in the island of Cuba the crown took every measure the statesmanship of the time could devise. *Cedulas* were issued prohibiting them on penalty of death and confiscation of goods from leaving the country without permission of local authority; even traders (1528) were under bond to return from their voyages. Every endeavor was exerted to augment the legitimate white population by making unmarried men ineligible to be *encomenderos*, by declaring *encomiendas* to be heritable property, by discouraging concubinage, and by compelling men married in Spain to fetch their wives to the island where Cubeñas *naborias* had not infrequently supplanted them. Many unions between Spaniards and Cubeñas were legal and there is evidence that native wives were by no means persistent savages. Evidently there was in the colony a considerable number of illegitimate children, for on Hurtado's suggestion the crown undertook to turn an honest penny by legitimizing them for a price, that they might become their fathers' heirs as these desired them to be.

Like a tragic background behind these amenable women among the aborigines fancy pictures the irreconcilables,—still singing, dancing (as late as de Soto's time), poisoning and hanging themselves "by tens,"

starving in the mines, plotting rebellion during the "dead season" when the mines closed and they were turned out to find themselves, and now carrying their plots into effect with stolen steel and blazing torch. Savager than they, beside them stand the *bozal* blacks newly brought out of Africa.

African slave trade to the Indies was established before the conquest of Cuba began. Blacks had arrived among other chattels of incoming settlers as early at least as 1513 when Amador de Lares got license to import four. Velazquez seems to have wished to bar blacks from Cuba; at one time he refused to admit them insisting that he had no authority to do so, and he protested that they were undesirable. I believe he feared them as did for instance Fray Bernaldino de Mançanedo who in recommending at that early date that blacks be supplied to the Indies excepted Cuba because there were too many natives there,—i. e., to add blacks to the red population was to endanger the safety of the white.

Authority previously granted under which the African slave trade with Indies was flourishing, was rescinded on September 23, 1516; on that date the crown took action to bring the business under its direct control, on the ground that already blacks and Indians had come to constitute a real menace to white supremacy in the New World. It was provided that thereafter no Africans might be admitted into Cuba (specifically included in the regulation) except when accompanied by special royal permit. The sale of such permits at a good stiff price per "piece" became an interesting source of revenue to the crown.

The policy of controlling the slave trade to Indies by

letting it out under contract was soon inaugurated and in provisions of these contracts Cuba was not neglected. By 1518 the settlers in Cuba expressed the opinion that every white resident should have the right to import six black slaves, three males and three females, "to remedy the matter of population." The crown suspected that under one concession requiring delivery in Cuba of 700 slaves, even more than the grand total which the agreement allowed were sent to the Indies and when Cuba asked another thousand on plea that the as yet non-existent sugar industry needed them, the crown authorized the entrance of 300 only (1526). Again in 1530 it was a question if Cuba was getting the 400 head which the German concessionaries were due to supply. Even if big contracts with wholesale traders were not always carried out, there is nevertheless evidence enough in the countless licenses issued to individuals to take with them to Cuba from one to a dozen blacks for their personal service to warrant me in my own conviction that immigration to Cuba was from a very early date blacker than it was white. In the 1530's the number of negroes in Cuba was estimated at 500 and again at 1000, market value 65 to 70 pesos the head.

The first negro uprising occurred in 1533 at the Jobabo mines where the four blacks guilty of it paid for their temerity with their lives. Slave owners contributed a ducat or a half *peso* per head of slaves they owned into a fund employed to hunt down runaways; later, importers were made to pay this tax, and the system continued intermittently to the end of the century at least. When Governor Rojas forbade that negro slaves be punished "excessively save when they needed

it, except by civil authorities," giving as his reason that cruelty led to revolt, slave owners protested to the crown that for safety's sake they must be permitted to inspire obedience through terror, and asked that negroes be forbidden to carry knives longer than "a palm's length," or to travel in parties.

After 1527 it was required that half the negro slaves imported into the Indies should be females and marriage "by law and blessing" between blacks was made legal,—a privilege sometimes made obligatory as in 1527, when a short period was set within which black slaves must marry. Their owners protested that a sufficient number of black females was not available, and got the time limit extended. This requirement was a measure intended to encourage good steady work and to prevent servile rebellions by making the negroes more contented with their misery, so shared. Owners had no objection to a large proportion, say one-third, of their slaves being females; one commenting upon the matter remarks with complacency that negroes thrived in Cuba, multiplying with a fecundity which made their purchase a good investment. Early, too (1526), the crown invited the colonists to consider ways and means to permit faithful slaves to buy their liberty; a confidential report on the point was requested. By the end of the century "free blacks" were an appreciable element in the population.

It is perhaps not out of place to call attention here to the fact that to the Spaniard his black slave was merely his social and political inferior; he never entertained, for instance, any notion that the negro was a soul-less son of Cain condemned to servitude by divine wrath. Far from it, he recognized the black's equality

with him before the altar of the Catholic church, and insisted upon the negro's taking advantage of it no matter how much the slave would have preferred to stay at home on Sundays and feast-days working his garden plot that he might have enough to eat. Certainly the negro had a soul and his master did not propose to be blamed for loss of it by permitting him to live in sin, either of concubinage or of absence from mass! When he became free, and even before he became free the slave had rights before the law. This attitude of mind of the Spaniard,—so very different indeed from that of the slave-holding North American,—partly explains the facility with which he mingled his “pure, clean” white blood with black so begetting a mulatto population to be reckoned with later; this element does not attain to any importance in the period of Cuban history which this work covers. Further, in this connection it is not to be forgotten that the Spaniard himself had not emerged entirely uncolored from beneath wave after wave of Afro-Semitic invasion that swept the peninsula. It may not be quite true that “Africa begins at the Pyrenees,” but certainly to Africa sunny Andalusia owes her very charm: the black eyes and hair of her daughters, her hilarious colorings, her devotion to dancing, her music, her passionate demand for gaudy display, and because of Seville’s preëminence in American trade Andalusia influenced Cuba. All these effects of the racial commingling which there long antedated the discovery of Cuba, were brought to Cuba in her whitest colonists; and when I endeavor to determine effects certainly due to the later intermingling of bloods in the island, I am at a loss to name any except the strengthening of existing

characteristics, unless, perhaps, one may trace to the aboriginal Cubeño (who gesticulated) the Cuban's indulgence in gesture when he talks. Truly, I believe that peculiarity may be the one surviving aboriginal trait.

Cuba early complained of a hampering lack of labor. When, *circa* 1530, the crown gave recurrent indications of an irradicable determination to liberate the Cubeños, and especially when importation of Indian slaves was prohibited, the easiest solution of the difficulties presented was that which even the pious las Casas with all his humane zeal did not hesitate to recommend: a change in the color of the victim! More black slaves to replace the red! No question of the propriety of black or white slavery seems to have troubled the mind of Charles V. or those of his colonists in Cuba. Logically not,—even the problem of the Cubeños and aborigines of other parts was political, not moral: the question there involved was not the propriety of servitude in general, but of title to the particular parcel of "pieces" which the natives of the Americas constituted. The archbishop of Santo Domingo considered black slaves necessary to Cuba and advised that their importation into the island be encouraged. The council for the Indies recommended (1536) that the crown "throw wide the door" to trade in slaves, relieving it of all requirements save payment of duties on the goods. Bishop Ramirez informed the crown that the number of *encomendados* was diminishing under the harsh treatment and hard labor the *repartimiento* system inflicted on them, a matter which he lamented less for the natives' sake than on account of the Spanish settlers who he said would have no means of support when there were no Indians, unless prior to "inaugurating"

the "innovation" of liberating the Cubeños, on which Charles was determined, the crown should invest a year or two's income from the island in black slaves to be distributed among the settlers that they might not so severely miss their *encomiendas* if these were freed.

Accordingly the crown ordered that the royal revenues from the whole country for the year 1531 be set aside to be invested in black slaves to be distributed among responsible settlers who should obligate themselves to pay for the same in two years' time. The bishop was advised that if he thought announcement of the real reason for this, i. e., the crown's determination to free the Cubeños, would redound to their detriment, that is, that the Spaniards would work them to death in the last period of their mastery, then he need not advertise this reason but as explanation of the measure give sickness among the natives (the pestilence of 1528-30) and the lack of black slaves, i. e., a general shortage of labor. The colony expressed very great appreciation of the crown's generosity. Its lack of definite provisions for the expenditure of the 7000 *pesos* which were duly collected into the officials' three-keyed box was not at the time observed nor ever understood generally, but documents show the truth to be that the crown had no intention of actually expending that money in blacks until the definite freeing of the Cubeños made it necessary. Presently plans were drawn for its expenditure and forwarded to the crown: it was the general opinion that the money should be sent to Seville or to Lisbon to buy the blacks inasmuch as no such number as it would purchase, estimated at 700, would present themselves in Santiago "not in ten years." The crown acknowledged with thanks this

evidence of the colony's interest in the matter but issued no orders and so the money lay until eventually the crown resumed possession of it for his own purposes.

To mitigate their disappointment at not receiving slaves as expected from the revenues of 1531, the colonists demanded reduction in the percentage due the crown on gold mined: it had fluctuated from a fifth to a tenth, or an eighth, and varied as the miners were Cubeños or negroes, and now the colonists talked of a fifteenth or a twentieth being quite enough to pay. Mining was still the island's principal interest, especially in the central districts, and gold was still produced in amount that would have been better appreciated had not Mexico and other portions of the continent been in glorious competition to fill the strong boxes of Charles V. June 13, 1527, to March 4, 1528, there were smelted at Santiago 22,685 pesos of "fine" gold and 6,035 of "low" gold, of Cuban origin. February 10, 1528, to April 3, 1529, 30,970 pesos in all were smelted, the diminution being due, the treasurer said, to rebellion among the Cubeños. In token of divine approval of the crown's willingness to provide the island with black slave labor (or so the colonists assured the emperor!) new rich mines of gold ore in veins (as contrasted with the usual placers) were discovered,—the Jobabo mines at Cueyba,—which in five months yielded 50,000 pesos, and this together with the crown's promise of slaves raised the island, as Vadillo put it, from the dead. In 1534 Rojas found mines in operation near Puerto Principe, at Sabana de Guaimaro, at Portillo, at Vasco Porcallo's settlement of Sabana, and perhaps elsewhere as well. In 1535 the production of gold fell off discouragingly: lack of labor and simply

that the metal was not found were the explanations given. Hurtado advised that the crown pay official prospectors to go look for new mines. In 1538 gold mined in the island amounted to a little less than 13,000 pesos, the lowest record in twelve years.

Gold presumably in bars as turned out by the *fundicion* circulated through the colony as a medium of exchange. To relieve it from that duty the island had asked in Velazquez's time and again in 1526 for gold, silver and copper coins to a total of two *cuentos* and, apparently, got them. Certainly in all this century, much as Cuba complained of cheap silver from Panama, the colony did not suffer from bad money (*mala moneda*) as, for instance, did Porto Rico where at one period *cuartos* in circulation were worth more as copper for industrial purposes than as coin! This evil of debased currency was at the period common to Spain as well as to her Indies; it was an effect of the irrational economic policies Charles permitted, which, it might be added, were errors not peculiarly his own. Economics was a science as yet an unknown.

Charles was especially anxious to find iron in Cuba,—he needed it to make artillery for his endless wars,—and he waxed indignant when he was not promptly advised of its existence here. That Columbus had seen deposits of this mineral had been forgotten, and the crown was at one time informed that there was no iron in the island! It is curious to note in passing that certain "round stones" were at one time sent from Cuba to Spain to be used as cannon balls, but the cost of transportation exceeded their value.

Some time previous to this (probably in 1529) copper had been discovered three leagues from Santiago in

what was called the Cardenillo hill, but nothing was known of its value until it chanced that among passengers of a ship coming from Mexico was a bell-maker who on hearing of the ore, visited the place, took specimens and out of them extracted copper. He must have expressed immediate appreciation of what are now the famous Cobre mines for a dispute at once arose between Governor Guzman, who seems to have thought the settlers had a right to profit by the mineral, and the royal officials, who declared the crown entitled to dispose of the deposit as he should see fit. It has been deduced from certain analyses made by Dr. Ledoux that the aborigines of Cuba worked the copper mines of Cobre and trafficked in copper with primitive peoples of Florida because copper relics of those tribes when assayed have shown the presence of the same percentages of silver and gold that are contained in the ore of these Cuban deposits. No other ore known assays the same. As against this theory stands the fact that the Cubeños seem to have made no use of the metal among themselves. I have found nothing in the documents I have seen to throw any light on this point. The Spaniards of Santiago, however, early considered the mines important and in reporting to the crown in September, 1530, the governor and officials urged that metallurgists and bellows be sent to make exploitation possible and that the crown develop the mines as his own but also permit *vecinos* to work the deposits on the basis of 10% payable to the royal revenues. The crown entered into an agreement with Luis de Espinosa, silversmith, looking to exploitation of these mines. Espinosa bound himself to take equipment to Cuba, to build a masonry house suitable for a *fundicion* at the foot of the copper

hill. The crown evidently intended the *vecinos* should be free to mine the ore, since for handling it for them Espinosa was authorized to charge them rates to be set by the governor and royal officials. On what copper he and eight other persons mined he was to pay the crown one-tenth part only whereas all others were to pay the king one-fifth. Apparently no actual development of the mines was made under this concession although Espinosa attempted it. Guzman said he was unable to do anything alone and some clause in his concession prevented partnership of any sort. Moreover, Guzman added, one-fifth was too much to expect the *vecinos* to pay the crown on copper mining; an order was consequently issued making the rate one-tenth for ten years.

Interest in the copper deposits at Santiago revived in 1540 at a time when the crown was finding it most difficult to lay hand on artillery for casting which that metal was useful indeed. In April of that year a German passing through Santiago from the Flemish settlement in Venezuela,—presumably Juan Tezel of Nuremberg, visited the deposits and, believing he saw value there, entered into an agreement with the town council to work them. He extracted 55% and 60% copper from the ore and it was found to carry gold and silver. The *Lic.* Vadillo, who happened to be passing through Santiago from the continent en route to Santo Domingo, said the proportion was two ounces of gold to a hundredweight of copper: samples were sent to Spain which the crown ordered tested. The settlers fondly hoped that as the mines deepened the percentage of gold and silver would increase. They petitioned for authority to mine forever on payment

of a twentieth to the crown and their petition was granted for ten years. Hurtado demanded that workmen who understood copper refining be sent to Cuba "unless the ore is to lie where it grew." By 1541 there were forty negroes at work in the mines and Gaspar de Lomanes had smelted more than 150 *quintales*, though a freshet carried away improvements made. In January, 1546, Tezel entered into an agreement with the crown to work these mines; he had taken samples to Germany,—home of skilled metallurgists,—and evidently they had proven up to expectations, for he reported the mines to be medium rich in quality and plentiful in quantity. Tezel, or so he informed the crown, had learned copper smelting in Germany. When he arrived in Santiago, accompanied by his officials (who were Freidrich, Conrad, etc., etc.) the settlers demanded that he divulge the secrets of the art. Their quarrels waxed hot but Doctor Angulo arranged a compromise agreement between Tezel and the council according to which Tezel was permitted to stake off two mines for himself; he agreed to teach copper mining and smelting to slaves the settlers sent to him for instruction, in exchange for one and a half year's service from each apprentice, he to find them; he had a right to turn off those who proved incapable of learning, and in recompense for time, money and genius he expended on this matter he and his heirs were to receive 3% on the copper mined thereafter by others throughout the island,—all this in addition to the privileges conferred by his previous agreement with the king. Tezel spent the rest of his life,—twenty years,—in exploiting the copper mines of Cobre. Before 1545 Juan de Lobera had taken 90 *quintales* of Cuban copper to Spain; in

the spring of 1547 more arrived and Seville was ordered to cast it into artillery for the fort in Havana and to report upon its quality as demonstrated in this practical manner. Seville proposed to cast three cannon; one, a falconet, burst in the casting and the master in charge who went to the hospital in consequence may have been the author of an opinion which, certainly, long prevailed, that Cuban copper was of intractable quality.

Agricultural development in the island was slow. The land about Santiago was cultivated to food-crops in which there was traffic with mainland settlements. These farms and trade in their products were the principal business of the residents, and during Rojas' administration measures were taken (1535) to protect them from damage from loose stock, the documents indicating a considerable conflict of interests. Elsewhere the cattle industry was more important than agriculture. All districts alike, however, were offended when de Soto, departing for Florida to remain there and from there exploit Cuba as a base of supplies, issued an order prohibiting exportation of food stuffs or cattle to any market excepting Florida. This measure was bitterly resented. The crown was told that it constituted the immediate ruin of the colony because it extinguished all its trade, and on October 3, 1539, a *cedula* commanded that *vecinos* be permitted to ship their goods wherever they desired to ship them for sale. Cuba then continued to export primitive food stuffs and meat both dried and on the hoof to Tierra Firme from Santiago and from Trinidad, and to Mexico from Havana and from Matanzas.

Possibilities of the sugar industry, appreciated in 1523, in ten years thereafter came no nearer realization

than a repeated expression of that appreciation: while in Spain in 1533 Guzman had obtained leave to import fifty slaves which were to be admitted free of duty on condition that he was to commence work on a sugar mill within two years and finish it in four, failure to do so making him liable to heavy penalties. When Guzman, evidently desiring to avoid these, asked that he be permitted to import these slaves free of duty and without any conditions attached, the reply was refusal and evidently he accomplished nothing in the matter. At this same time Hernando de Castro expressed desire to erect "the first sugar mill in Cuba" for which, he said, he had land and water available a league and a half from Santiago. To develop it he asked fifty Cubeños and leave to import fifty negroes free of duty and that privileges already conferred upon planters of Santo Domingo be extended to him. He was willing to obligate himself to finish his mill in three years, mortgaging forty negroes he owned as guarantee. The council for the Indies recommended that he be permitted to import the blacks free of duty (giving security to finish the mill in three years), it being provided that he might not sell these slaves or export them from the island, and if he failed to erect the mill as agreed he was to pay double duty on the slaves. Doubtless a *cedula* in accordance with the council's recommendations was issued to Castro, but apparently he did not succeed in his enterprise. Ten years later Juanes de Avila reported that the soil, climate and availability of water for irrigating purposes, proved Cuba well adapted to sugar-making and he suggested that a loan of three or four thousand *pesos* would encourage the erection of two or three factories. When his brother, Alonso de Avila,

went to court as *procurador*, he was instructed to ask that a loan of 4000 *pesos* be made to chosen persons to enable them to build mills. Chaves reported that in May, 1548, "a resident" of Santiago was at work upon a sugar factory in the immediate vicinity of that settlement and he had hopes that others would follow his example. In 1551 the council for the Indies reported favorably upon Governor Angulo's suggestion that ten or twelve thousand *pesos* be lent to help establish five or six mills in Cuba, and 300 slaves admitted for field laborers. Elsewhere,—in Porto Rico and in La Española especially,—sugar was the principal interest; nevertheless, although there were always those who thought they saw in it the whole future of Cuba, the sugar industry was not established in this island until *circa* 1590.

Records I have examined do not show that Cuba was taxed during the sixteenth century, except indirectly in customs duties, and by way of the crown's "fifth" on metals mined. To be sure, in 1529–30 Charles did borrow from residents of Cuba, for his campaigns against Barbarossa. Guzman, who raised the loan, classified the contributors thereto as those who lent willingly, those who lent unwillingly, those who were tricked into lending and those who refused flatly to lend at all. This money was, however, repaid with interest. Much later, Spain considered the advisability of levying in Cuba that most obnoxious transfer tax called the *alcabala*, but on the governor's adverse report as to the island's ability to pay it, refrained. Up to 1543 customs duties continued payable *ad valorem* at the rate of 7½%. Similarly 7½% was collected in Seville on all merchandise arriving from the Indies.

In 1543 2½% of this was declared to be a "removal tax" payable at port of origin in the Indies. Cuba was exempt from payment of this export tax; the only effect of it on the island was variation thereafter according to the region of origin in the amount of duty chargeable on goods entering Cuban ports. In 1538 collections in Cuba were a little over 1999 *pesos*. Expenditures for salaries, etc., increased faster than did receipts: when de Soto presented unusual warrants the bottom of the three-keyed box appeared, bare, and records cease to show any remittances to Spain of accumulated surplus; instead, by the middle of the century Cuba began to look to Tierra Firme, and later to Mexico, for support. This despite the fact that regulations governing customs matters became stricter. Guards, to prevent smuggling, were established. Merchandise arriving unmanifested was (1535) to be confiscated in fact, rather than overlooked as it had been on the plea that it amounted to little after all. The crown's "fifth" on metals mined,—which, as stated, was sometimes a fifth, sometimes an eighth, or a tenth, or a twentieth,—dwindled and disappeared as gold mining ceased. It will be recalled that the small revenue accruing from *penas de camara* (petty fines), had been appropriated to the support of hospitals and churches (and the Franciscan monastery in Santiago) to which pious purposes, also, the crown devoted certain disputed customs collections on Indian slaves and any other money too "tainted" for him to handle.

Because Cuba had no sugar, nor anything else save hides, tallow, etc., and perhaps a little hard wood, to export, the island felt the detrimental effects of Spanish commercial policies in this century less than did other

colonies; less than Porto Rico where ginger plantings were destroyed by court order, and less than La Española where the sugar industry was stifled by irrational regulations governing shipment and marketing of the crop. Only when freedom of inter-colony trade through the Caribbean was threatened, did Cuba protest. It is actually unnecessary to take up for consideration in relation to Cuba any aspect of Seville's monopoly of Indian trade. That (generally speaking) all merchandise for the Indies must clear from that port and all merchandise from the Indies must enter Spain there, was not a matter of vital moment to a colony which was importing little and exporting less. In the struggle of other colonies for freedom to trade with Galicia and with Flanders, Cuba had no part. Yet there can be no doubt that indirectly the island suffered from the stunting effect of existing restrictions. When (1556?) authorities in the Canary Islands acquired the right to clear vessels for the Indies, trade which already existed between Canary ports and Cuba developed further, and presently documents give glimpses of considerable fleets plying regularly between there and Havana. This Canary Island trade had a stimulating beneficial influence which is, however, difficult to set forth in detail.

Seville, nevertheless,—meaning its *casa de la contratacion*, other colonial offices there through which the crown administered the Americas, and even the council for the Indies,—represents another rapidly developing phase of the relationship between Spain and her colonies. Just as the trade of the western hemisphere was mercilessly exploited for the benefit of Seville's merchants, so in time the political administra-

tion of half a world came to be manipulated for the benefit of a bureaucracy which at this time had its center in that same city. Cuba, being as yet a lemon little worth the squeezing, saw this development in only one of its aspects: the incompetence of authorities in Seville who were charged with her affairs. They came to constitute an intolerable barrier between the crown, issuing orders as petitioned, and the colony which was not always reached by those orders, because Seville flagrantly neglected or openly disobeyed commands. Artillerymen now appear to draw salaries in forts where there is no artillery; garrisons are despatched overseas without any appropriation for their payment; skilled expensive men are sent to build works for which no materials are provided; and so forth, *ad infinitum*, as the bureaucratic paralysis spreads. Here and there a virile character like Lobera, like Mazariegos, or especially like Tejeda, cut through the network of red tape which involved him, and by high-handed disregard of superiors and all law, achieved salutary results; most officials, however, succumbed,—disheartened by slow and infrequent communication with their home offices, and discouraged by ignorance, partiality and neglect there. When one remembers that,—incompetent and careless as it appears to have been,—Spain's government under Charles V. and Philip II. is rated one of the most efficient in the Europe of its time, the only consolation a student of Cuba's affairs can draw from the comparison is the thought that doubtless he will not be called upon to prove that the French in Canada or the English in Virginia struggled for existence with any heavier millstones about their necks than Cuba carried after 1550 in the shape of the bureaucracy of Seville.

## FOREWORD TO BOOK III

Documentary sources of information concerning Cuba in the years 1550 to 1573 are scattered, in the Archive of the Indies. Unfortunately, in 54-1-15 correspondence of governors is missing from 1553 to 1563. The main thread runs through the *cedulares* of 79-4-2, and packages 54-1-15; 54-1-31; 54-1-32; 54-1-34; 54-2-2. Other data exist in the following eighty-four *legajos*: 1-1-1/19; 1-1-1/26; 1-2-2/18; 2-1-1/25; 2-1-24/36; 2-3-13/14; 2-5-1/14; 2-5-1/22; 2-5-4/12; 2-5-5/13; 2-6-6; 2-6-7; 2-6-8; 2-6-11; 7-1-1/12; 46-4-1/33; 47-1-8/35; 47-1-19; 47-1-21; 47-2-31/26; 47-2-42/37; 47-3-1/22; 47-3-48/5; 47-3-55/12; 47-3-54/11; 47-3-49/6; 48-4-29/39; 50-2-50/7; 51-1-27-3; 51-1-31/27; 51-1-39/35; 51-2-48/5; 51-2-49/6; 51-2-62/19; 51-2-65/22; 51-2-67/24; 51-3-80/4; 51-5-8/18; 51-5-9/19; 51-5-10/20; 51-5-12/22; 51-6-15/13; 51-6-17/15; 53-1-7; 53-1-10; 53-2-9; 53-4-9; 53-6-5; 53-6-6; 53-6-7; 53-6-8; 54-1-9; 54-1-11; 54-1-14/41; 54-2-5; 54-2-6; 54-3-1; 54-3-4; 54-3-6; 54-3-15; 54-3-16; 54-3-17; 54-3-19; 54-5-6; 58-5-8; 85-1-14; 98-7-8; 139-1-10; 139-1-11; 139-6-20; 140-3-9; 140-7-31; 140-7-32; 143-3-12; 146-1-8; 147-5-15; 148-2-6; 148-2-7; 148-4-5; 151-2-8; 153-1-6; 154-1-8; 155-2-25; 155-4-16.

I. A. W.



## BOOK III

### CHAPTER XIII

#### FIRST FORTS AND ARMADAS (1537-1549)

The great duel fought between Charles V. "of Germany," and Francis I., of France, for the mastery of Europe, was frequently interrupted by truces and by treaties, but from the point of view of Cuban history of their time it may be considered a continuous enmity. Despite the fact that the pope as God's vicar on earth in dividing the New World between Portugal and Spain had given the Caribbean and its islands to his Most Catholic Majesty, the Christian King of France was not always displeased when bold spirits among his subjects carried the war between Valois and Hapsburg into the western hemisphere. Especially, it may have gratified him to see "heretics" with whom the Reformation was filling France, annoy the orthodox vassals of his dearest enemy. On one occasion Charles suspected that an expedition fitted out at Dieppe was intended to capture Havana; instead, the French under Cartier and Roberval attempted the first settlement of Canada. Hard experience had not yet taught them that "the frozen country" held no such easy treasures as had the islands of the tropics and the southern continent; therefore the French had as yet turned no very covetous eyes toward the Caribbean. Neither had Spanish commerce there developed to a point it later attained when the plate

fleets out of Nombre de Dios and Vera Cruz became not only profitable prey to individual looters but a vulnerable point for attack on Spain herself because the whole fabric of her greatness was upheld by the wealth they carried. Prior to say 1560 French policy toward the Spanish Indies, in so far as it existed at all, was merely one of annoyance. It nevertheless was sufficient to build the first fort of any importance ever erected in Cuba and it shaped up Spain's curious commercial-naval policy with respect to America which was expressed in her famous plate fleets sailing the storied "Spanish main" under armed escort for protection against corsairs.

The French were the corsairs of the period. They roved the seas, preying on Spanish merchant vessels everywhere and taking settlements of the Indies to hold to ransom, or to destroy, as suited their convenience. These Frenchmen were not, nevertheless, mere lawless marauders; sometimes they were nobles of standing, with authority from the king of France for their expeditions, and the damage they inflicted was more than once subject of state council deliberations and of diplomatic negotiation, or, considered as occasioned in due course of war, it was taken into account in the making of peace treaties.

Ever since 1518 when report spread that Spanish vessels "ballasted with gold" were coming unprotected out of Mexico, the coasts of Spain itself and later the Indian trade routes had been harried by French "robbers by sea,"—the Spaniards they despoiled refused to see them in any other character. The first specific mention I have found of their incommoding Cuba relates how, evidently early in the year 1537, a Frenchman

who had already done damage along the mainland appeared off Havana in which harbor there were five Spanish vessels about to set out ". . . by the Bahama channel to Spain." Juan de Rojas and Juan de Bazan (*alcaldes*, I take it, of Havana) compelled three of these vessels to pursue and engage this corsair when, presently, he withdrew from before Havana to the port of Marien. After an artillery fight within the port of Marien which Gonzalo de Guzman says lasted three days the French were about to flee when the wind suddenly blew most unpropitiously for the Spaniards; they therefore deserted their vessels, escaping to land and the French took possession of all three ships, burning two and carrying off the third. This corsair, it appears, boldly entered Havana harbor and declared his intention to sack the town if any ill befell his vessels as they lay in port. It seems to have been his plan to wait there in the bay for Spanish vessels putting in from Tierra Firme and Mexico, but presently he went out to capture them further west, presumably off Cape San Anton where difficulties of doubling that point made the overhauling of sailing craft fairly easy. When news of his success in so doing reached Havana one vessel there unloaded what bullion it had aboard and put back to Mexico to advise the viceroy of the situation. For the first time, it would seem, such precious cargo was landed in Havana for safe-keeping: because corsairs had made the sea unsafe between Cuba and Spain. In 1537-38 communications out of Santiago were seriously interrupted "so shameless, bold and continuous" was the presence of the French. The more important island of La Española was suffering even more severely. The *audiencia* expressed to the king

astonishment and indignation at the corsairs' audacity everywhere, and the city of Santo Domingo lamented that the Indies were defenceless.

Early in April of 1538 a brigantine which cleared from Santiago offshore met a Frenchman who had already done serious damage in La Española. The Spaniard tried to escape back into port but was overhauled at the entrance into that harbor, which, because of its natural advantages had been considered safe from any intrusion. The watch on Morro headland had advised the town of a sail approaching and small boats had come out as usual to welcome it. They found the Frenchman despoiling his Spanish prize. He withdrew, taking the brigantine's crew with him as captives, but next day, guided by the pilot among them, he negotiated the narrow entrance and with all sail set he bore arrogantly across the bay toward the amazed and terrified town. Although the settlers were unarmed (they might have mustered eight crossbows among them), Gonzalo de Guzman declared that the landing place might have been defended by thirty men,—“if they had been men,”—especially if the negro population had assisted by throwing stones. Instead, in view of their lack of weapons when the enemy appeared the *vecinos* betook themselves to their outlying estates carrying their women and other valuables with them. The royal officials went along, conveying to safety the contents of the king's three-keyed box.

The corsair would then have burned the town,—“and the town burned,” Guzman continued, reporting to the crown, “I think your majesty would have had no island of Cuba left,”—had it not been for Diego Perez.

Diego Perez was a merchant of Seville who with at least two good ships had been doing business with Cuba for some years. His vessel then in Santiago harbor was the Magdalena,—small enough to fit in the corsair's hull, the Spaniards said,—but when the Frenchman bore down upon her, intent to ram her, she withdrew into very shallow water and from that vantage she fought the enemy desperately for hours.

Merchantman that she was the Magdalena carried artillery. Although Diego Perez had an artilleryman he took that post himself and never straightened from over his shots nor turned his face from the enemy until, after nightfall, the firing ceased. Under cover of darkness the corsair withdrew. He lingered a few days off port and then disappeared in the direction of Havana. He had while fighting in Santiago bay burned a ship laden with *cazabe* for the mainland coast. All agreed, in lauding Perez's prowess, that only his valor saved the town from a similar fate at the Frenchman's hands. The Spanish losses were three or four men killed and the Magdalena damaged. The Frenchman was believed to have suffered more severely; two of his dead were found and buried. For his service on this occasion and thirty years of similar sort preceding Diego Perez asked a coat-of-arms of the king of Spain whereon a lion should suggest how he had fought that day; the enemy's character was to be intimated by a wolf rampant, and he wanted a border of bursting bombs around the whole,—reminiscent of the sort of courtesies exchanged.

Unfortunately, there was no Diego Perez in Havana when the same Frenchman that militant merchant had driven from Santiago appeared off the western port. Its people fled the town, which the corsair looted. The

*audiencia* informed the king that he took even the church bells and that he insulted an image of Saint Peter by hanging it at a hut's door where it became a target for oranges thrown by those among the Frenchman's crew whose protestantism found satisfactory expression in this version of the "image-breaking" in vogue in France at the time. De Soto, learning of this heretic's visit to Havana, took immediate steps to repair what damage he had done in his fifteen days' stay.

Havana was obviously the point in Cuba from which to operate against Florida. Before de Soto left Spain, it had been decided to build a fort in Havana to protect the harbor and its shipping and that the *adelantado* should have charge of the work, for on March 20, 1537, the authorities at Seville were ordered to inform themselves as to a convenient site by consulting persons who had been in Havana. It was especially desired to overcome the danger and disadvantage of a certain hill overlooking the port. I do not believe that this hill was Cabaña, but, on the other hand, that it was the eminence to the west which has since almost disappeared from observation under the city itself,—few note how much higher Central Park is than the *plaza de armas*. They were to inform de Soto of their views, for his guidance, and if he decided that he needed to take with him a master builder and materials they were to provide these, reporting the matter to the crown. Seville was to determine whether or not it would be better to build on Morro headland instead of in the town itself. On the same date de Soto was advised to the same effect: that a fort was to be built, that he was to have charge, and that the royal officials of Cuba would supply the money. He was to take Seville's

report into consideration. If he decided in favor of a fort in the town rather than on Morro, he was to follow a plan therewith supplied him. Presumably de Soto did not have time to reach a decision in this matter before he sailed for Cuba, for the authorities of Seville in reply on the point stated that they had written to de Soto to report on the port and on the site he would suggest for the fort, and to send a drawing of the locality. The crown expressed a desire to see this when it should come. Immediately on reaching Cuba de Soto demanded 4000 *pesos* of the royal officials at Santiago (on the strength of a royal *cedula* to them instructing them to provide the necessary funds) with which he proposed, they said, to buy a dozen slaves and the materials needed to build the fort in Havana. They had had 5000 *pesos* in the three-keyed box but of these 1500 had been paid out on other warrants. Of the balance of 3500 *pesos* they reluctantly delivered 3000 to de Soto and on reporting to the crown that they had done so they inquired how much if any more they should furnish on demand, and hinted (then, and Hurtado said it more plainly later) that they doubted that the money would be honestly applied to the work for which it was appropriated. Since they could not be expected to go to Havana to keep account of the matter they requested that the *alcaldes* and councilmen there be instructed to do so. In reply the crown pointed out to them that they had not been ordered to deliver money to de Soto, but to expend it on a fort for Havana under his direction. They were bidden to read royal *ce<sup>du</sup>las* more intelligently. The king was "amazed" at their failure to observe the fine point of this one and intimated that any other error of the sort would be

made at their own expense. Hurtado said that de Soto persuaded the factor Castro with a grant of twenty Cubeños to deliver over this money. The fort, the treasurer estimated, would cost 2000 *pesos* and would not be begun for a year. The actual work on Havana's first fort was given by de Soto to Juan de Azeituno, an old resident of Santiago, to do. He built it in seven months and, having reported it done, habitable and defensible, he was on March 12, 1540, made *alcaide* (warden) of it by royal commission at a salary less than that which de Soto had assigned him as builder.

I believe that this first fort,—which was square and had a square tower thirty-seven feet high,—was situated approximately where the state department stands to-day. It was unwisely located and poorly constructed; Juanes de Avila (who wrote that in 1545 he had added bastions to it) declared that he considered it "no fort at all except in name" and generals of passing armadas instructed to inspect and report upon it agreed in condemning it. De Avila said that no *alcaide* to command the fort was necessary,—that the governor's representative in Havana could assume charge of it,—and there is evidence that during his administration Francisco de Parada succeeded Azeituno in that responsibility, his salary being possession of a village of natives, some fifty in number, at Matabano which had been the Lady Isabel de Bobadilla's. By 1548 Juan de Lobera who was a *vecino* of Havana, brother-in-law of Juan de Rojas and able to recite his lineage back to days of King John of Navarre and Aragon whom one ancestor served as mayordomo, had become the fort's *alcaide*. He shared in the general poor opinion of it. As early as August, 1549, the crown suspected

that it was "of little service, . . . to remedy the matter most of it must be torn down," and perhaps another site chosen for an entirely new work, the location preferred being that of Juan de Rojas' masonry residences, which is the site that Fuerza occupies to-day.

In 1540-41, because of French activities evident in Jacques Cartier's and Roberval's voyages and expeditions to settle in Canada, the crown evinced desire to see Havana's fort well equipped for defence and the citizens armed. Artillery was especially necessary, although there was some in the town planted before Rojas' masonry houses, and on Morro headland which some persons considered a point of greatest strategical importance. "The savage," a cannon weighing 47 *quintales*, from Alonso Bazan's ship, and a culebrin, each with 150 balls, and five small falconets with their ammunition, were assigned to the service of the fort. Seville was ordered to provide an artilleryman on salary payable from Cuban revenues and seems to have had difficulty in finding one to accept the post at 150 ducats, passage for self and goods provided. The despatch of a garrison of twenty-five men was discussed. The artilleryman, however, materialized before the artillery he was to handle, and he was on the scene drawing pay at a time when there were no guns to engage his attention. In the year 1545-46 Juan de Lobera, dissatisfied with this state of affairs, exerted himself energetically in Spain to obtain artillery and in the very early months of 1546 he sailed for Cuba with some, which the *cedulas* which he carried suggest he meant to land at its destination regardless of red tape at Seville and of governors of ports en route who might seek to appropriate it to their own ill-equipped fortifications.

This first fort in Havana was the first monument in Cuba to any foreign influence in the island's affairs. Fear of the French built it, and Fuerza which succeeded it, just as later fear of the English built Punta and Morro castles. All of these fortifications were indicative, not of any appreciation of Cuba for herself, but of the strategical importance of Havana as a wayport between the mainland of America and the peninsula of Spain.

Even in Vadillo's time Havana was the second city in size in the island, and despite protests that it was an innovation the royal officials were then ordered to collect what duties were payable on merchandise entering that port; they were to act through an *alcalde* and two *regidores* they were to appoint to represent them there. Winds and currents determined trade-routes for the sail-driven craft of the era and before de Soto's arrival Havana was the rendezvous of vessels homeward bound from Tierra Firme and Mexico; there they made repairs, took on water and provisions, and in general made ready for the long slow crossing of the Atlantic Ocean. Now, too, fear of the French was shaping Spain's system of protection for Indian trade. On May 12, 1537, the crown advised the governor of Cuba that because of the activity of French corsairs Blasco Nuñez Vela with an armada (the word means an armed fleet, i. e., a squadron of warships) would call for gold and silver to be sent to Spain to the crown; the *audiencia* of Santo Domingo ordered the royal officials to send no bullion to Spain save in *navios de armada*. Private persons might take advantage of the protection Nuñez Vela's squadron represented to send their gold and silver home if they so desired, but that they do so was not compul-

sory. It is possible that those who shipped by the armada regretted it, for there is evidence that when Nuñez Vela returned to Spain the crown took possession of various lots of bullion he bought which were privately owned; all was however soon repaid less 1% of the convoy tax plus 3 1/3% interest. This, to all appearances the first armada despatched to Indies to protect bullion shipments, may have called at Santiago in Cuba, though I doubt it; others immediately following it made Havana their port. The armada of four or six vessels which Cuba was advised in October, 1541, to expect was to go to Havana from Nombre de Dios, and Mexico was ordered to have its bullion in Havana for the general in command to pick up there. Thus the route later followed by the rich plate fleets was early laid down with Havana as the rendezvous for shipping from Tierra Firme and from Mexico. Merchantmen had still been permitted to sail to and from the Indies as they chose, at their own risk; in 1539 they had been ordered to carry certain artillery, but now, in 1543, on petition of Seville merchants the crown ordered that in time of war ships bound for the Indies should sail together, in convoyed fleets. Possibly merchant vessels in a fleet crossed with Blasco Nuñez's and subsequent armadas; however, it was apparently not then required that they do so,—but now all trading vessels must sail under guard. No vessel less than ten tons burden was to be cleared for Indies; the minimum fleet was to be ten vessels, and they were to leave in March and again in September from Seville escorted by warships which after seeing them safely past danger were to devote three months to hunting corsairs in the Caribbean, at the end of that time presenting themselves in

Havana to escort home again those merchant vessels which should have congregated there for the crossing. Earlier armadas had been specially instructed to guard the treasure they carried and avoid encounters with the enemy. The escorting armada of 1543-44 found it wiser to follow the same tactics: so active were the French, especially between Tierra Firme and Havana, the warships assigned to convoy this first merchant fleet stood by their charge all along the route. At the end of 1544, the war being over, Seville merchants petitioned that the restriction on shipping which the foregoing arrangement represented be removed, and it was so ordered. Merchantmen were again free to sail from Seville when they would for the new world.

But, hostilities between France and England providing corsairs with a cover under which to molest Spanish trade, in January, 1546, a secret conference was ordered at Seville to consider ways and means of protection. Merchants held that the armadas of former years had been expensive and ineffective; it was now suggested that merchant ships be armed to protect themselves, and that they be more lightly laden (to facilitate quick manœuvres), that they sail in fleets, an armada going forth to meet them and to escort them in on their return since on the coasts of Spain itself most danger now threatened. Whatever may have been the tenor of deliberations through the year 1546, the former arrangement of convoyed fleets of not less than ten vessels, each over 100 tons burden, was ordered continued, as a war measure until further notice, but because Seville protested that no armada was available to escort vessels already, in April, 1547, laden for clearance in Seville, and because longer delay in their departure

meant ruin of their cargoes, the crown permitted these to go unconvoyed, but armed for their own defence. In brief, Spain's commercial policies as these affected transportation were as yet in uncertain, formative stage.

## CHAPTER XIV

### DESTRUCTIVE ACTIVITIES OF THE FRENCH (1550-1555)

*Tantas son las calamidades y miserias por sus pasos contados se va acabando (la isla).*—Bishop Duranga, 54-1-31, p. 179.

Presence of armadas and merchantmen in Havana harbor, and orders that they provide food and water for warships and see to it that Mexico's bullion was properly delivered to generals in command of these, drew governors of Cuba into the west, to keep the peace and do justice in that port, and otherwise to render it competent to meet the demands made upon its resources.

The greatest immediate need was an adequate accessible supply of fresh water. Doubtless some cisterns existed, but to replenish visiting ships potable water was fetched by their crews or by slaves, in small boats from the Almendares River, which comes into the sea a little west of Havana. By 1544-45 a plan existed to bring water into town by an open ditch from the river to the bay. De Avila recommended the project and Chaves, authorized to proceed with the work, laid a tax on wine, meat and soap to raise the necessary funds. This tax persisted, with some interruptions, for the next fifty years; it was not until the arrival of Bautista Antoneli, at the end of the century, that engineering difficulties were overcome, and fresh water poured into the town in more than one locality, in quantity sufficient to satisfy all demands.

When in 1550 Doctor Angulo went to Havana,—the first governor to take up permanent residence there,—he seems to have labored for the improvement of the place. He claimed later to have removed the hut which had been Havana's church and to have begun work on a masonry building (100 x 40 feet) to replace it which by November of 1552 was pretty well along, although it was not finished in the next three years; others said that this work commenced before his arrival in Havana. He claimed that he collected alms to help construction of the church; his enemies said that he pocketed the collections. Angulo claimed to have built an addition to the hospital and to have erected two store buildings back of it to be rented as an income for the institution. He claimed to have built a good abattoir, from fines he levied, and to have roofed with tiles and otherwise repaired the jail and improved it with a window that prisoners "might enjoy a view, and good treatment." Prices of food stuffs tended to soar in Havana when ships came in: this matter was supposed to be regulated by a deputy chosen every three months out of the city council, and Angulo claimed to have effectively assisted to keep the cost of living normal. In fact, evidence seems to be that he was an active if not an excellent governor. To complete the unpopularity which possibly this very fact won for him, in November, 1552, he proclaimed the liberty of Indian slaves, no favorable response to the appeal against that measure having been received from the crown.

Santiago through Juan de Agramonte demanded of the *audiencia a juez de residencia* against Angulo, "because of his grave offences, venality, robberies and impositions." On June 9, 1552, the city council of Havana

meeting secretly in Pedro de Velazquez's house acted on the *procurador*'s demand that such a judge be requested of that court. In September Havana's representatives laid 54 accusations against Angulo before the *audiencia*, adding that they had a ship in Santo Domingo harbor ready to convey the judge they wanted, to Havana at once.

These accusations allege that Angulo was unjust, and "afflicted the city with new sorts and manners of extortions," that he manipulated auctions and the value of bullion and coin to his own benefit,—that he gambled with passengers from Mexico and Peru, to such extent that in one case a victim of his skill died in the charity hospital miserably stripped of a fortune,—that he engaged in trade,—that he permitted Doña Violante his wife to dictate decisions in suits at law,—that he treated the settlers with disrespect, instructing his under-sheriff to carry a club to beat in the head of any who did not arise when he entered church, etc., etc.,—but the principal complaint seems nevertheless to have been that Angulo had taken up his permanent residence in Havana. The city wanted him ordered to remove to Santiago, insisting that he preferred Havana for private business reasons.

The *audiencia* hesitated not at all to issue an order to this effect; because "it was notorious that Havana was a small port," Angulo was bidden to go live at Santiago, and since it was expected that he would resist, this order was strengthened by a proviso that it be obeyed regardless of any appeal taken. Havana's representatives then requested various protective orders: that Angulo should not molest the councilmen and others who had acted against him, nor carry away with him when he

went any Indians, mixed breeds, or whites even though they seemed to go of their own free will, nor leave any business agent behind to represent him in Havana. Also, he was forbidden to "impede the council in its meetings held for good government of the city." This was in response to demand that he be prohibited from entering council meetings. Angulo agreed to obey the *audiencia's* order but added that the *cabildo* should not meet without the governor, thus circumventing the intention of the petitioners to prevent him from attending sessions.

As to removing to Santiago, when served with the *audiencia's* order to do so, Angulo replied that he "obeyed" it with due respect but as to "complying" with it, he would inform his majesty. He appealed, stating that he was a good governor and judge, that the court had been falsely informed, and that the root of dislike of him was that he had truly freed the Cubeños. This may have been precisely the fact.

Governor Angulo went in person to the *audiencia* to present his side of the controversy in which he had become involved: he had arrived in Santo Domingo by January, 1553. Alonso de Rojas represented Havana. To prove that he should reside there Angulo recited the importance of Havana harbor as rendezvous for shipping, and the necessity of his presence to protect it from the French. He carried his point and on February 4, 1553, the *audiencia* bade him return and maintain his residence in Havana until the crown should decide the issue. As to a judge to *residenciar* Angulo, that court hoped for one from Spain yet when none came with the fleet in the early spring of 1553, the

*audiencia* with evident regret decided not to make such appointment.

Angulo returned to Cuba via Santiago, where he proclaimed the Indian slaves of that region free: he travelled overland toward Havana, repeating this proclamation at Baracoa, Bayamo, Trinidad and Puerto Principe.

When he reached Havana (August, 1553?) Angulo found the council had (May, 1553) "declared him no governor," because he had left his jurisdiction without due authority and remained more than ninety days away. In June the crown commissioned *Lic.* Carasa to *residenciar* Angulo and his lieutenants. I have not seen any evidence that this commission was used. Angulo continued to exercise his office.

He had come back to Havana in nowise chastened. He lost the support of the two Rojas,—of Juan de Rojas who had been his representative in Havana during his absence in Santo Domingo, and of Juan de Ynestrosa (son of Manuel de Rojas) who had been as active in his behalf. Juan de Rojas refused to serve longer as *regidor* and Ynestrosa had to be compelled to accept ere he would become *alcalde* for the year 1554. Evidently the atmosphere had become uncongenial to the Rojas' temperament, inclined as it was to reasonable, just procedure. Again the council complained against Angulo and on August 29, 1554, the *audiencia* commissioned Bernardo Bernaldez to act as *juez de residencia* against the governor. I have seen no documents concerning any such *residencia*.

In 1552-53 Spanish relations with France again threatened danger to Cuba. Charles V. and the king of France had closed in the last round of their long struggle. The crown warned the colony, bidding all its

settlers be on their guard. Lobera, active *alcaide* of a fort he knew to be entirely inadequate to defend Havana, served a *cedula* on the governor and the council in consequence of which the regular nightly patrol was increased, look-outs were maintained day and night on Morro headland, and two mounted guards were stationed near the mouth of the Almendares where enemies might be expected to attempt to land. It was arranged that on sight of a sail twelve specified men were to go into the fort and remain there as garrison until its identity was established; if an enemy, they remained there to fight, while the rest of the citizens when the drum beat were to rally to the governor wherever he might be. Every man was to go armed, with at least a sword, day and night, and none were to leave the city for their country estates without express permission of the governor. On review the fighting force of the vicinity was found to be sixteen cavalry, in command of Juan de Rojas, and about sixty-five infantry, variously armed. All vessels now approaching Havana were to halt outside, salute the fort and submit to inspection before entering. From Santo Domingo the crown was warned that Havana was helpless and Lobera, its *alcaide*, "very fearful." Under date of September, 1553, the island was advised of the renewal of hostilities with France.

There was abroad on the seas in these days Jacques Sores,—“one of the best corsairs,” according to Pedro de Menendez, a good judge of their quality, “in all of France and England. He is a Frenchman and they call him Captain Sores. . . .” He had served with distinction under other men until, falling out with his superior, he betook himself with a single ship into the

Indies to do damage on his own account. Menendez later stated that Sores was patronized by Conde in France and by no less than Queen Elizabeth herself in England; the Spaniard suspected him to be their "captain general on the seas" against the Catholics, and said that only Conde's death ended this career for Sores. Be this as it may, in the spring of 1554 two French caravels and a patax entered Santiago harbor; the people defended the town with their artillery, from the bulwark by the landing. To animate the faint-hearted (there were some), Bishop Duranga who had succeeded Sarmiento, deceased, "lifted his skirts and encouraged them as best he could, and absolved them as the occasion demanded." The enemy withdrew, having succeeded only in capturing at least two vessels in the bay. In July following other Frenchmen whom the bishop said were Basques, made a landing toward dawn, surprised the guard, captured leading men and women (whom they held to ransom), and all in all without much trouble made themselves masters of the place where they remained "as at home" for something over a month. They took what they could, and with it departed at their leisure. They, or their kind, made perhaps other visits to the vicinity at this same time; they cleaned out Macaca (a south coast port) and brought Santiago to such condition that a visiting priest presently described its people as terrorized and so reduced by these visitations, and by the looting of their trading vessels at sea, that "the men had not a coat to their backs nor the women a chemise to put on." Many fled to Bayamo,—among them, Bishop Duranga,—and although it was reported that the Bayameses returned with them to the port when it became feasible to help

them rebuild their homes, it is quite likely that some, like the bishop himself, remained in the inland city and added to its importance at the expense of Santiago's. All these depredations were laid to Captain Sores: despite the fact that the Frenchman who took Santiago spared the church there, whereas Sores elsewhere showed himself "a fine Lutheran."

Havana heard of these and similar events in Porto Rico and St. Domingo with alarm that was justified: the French had promised to call there. Now the look-outs on Morro were faithful to their duty, and earnest patrols rode back and forth from Punta to the Almendares. Four pieces of artillery were located on a terraplene before Juan de Rojas' masonry houses to command both the harbor mouth and overland approach to the town. This house of Rojas', the walls of the hospital and those of the unfinished church, were the only solid structures in the town excepting the worthless fort, the outer- and tower-gates of which were timber. Roll-call showed *vecinos* now available to fight in case of need, to number thirty including even the old and the ill. A petty force indeed, landing on the coast between Punta and the river, would find Havana at its mercy. "It is not within our powers," the settlers cried to the king, "to resist, but we can die doing our duty in your majesty's service." And die they did. On the morning of July 10, 1555, at about sunrise the watch on Morro headland ran up a signal that meant "A sail." The fort fired a shot and those men whose duty it was to garrison it assembled within, in command of the *alcaide*, Juan de Lobera. Governor Angulo appeared, on horseback; three more citizens, mounted, joined him. They could not agree as to

what ship it might be which now appeared from behind the promontory. It passed the mouth of the harbor, continuing west. The governor sent two men on horseback to follow alongshore and report. They returned, their horses stretched to full speed, with news that the brigantine had dropped anchor off Juan Guillen (San Lazaro) inlet and landed two boatloads of well-armed men, who were even then advancing on the settlement by way of a narrow path through the otherwise impenetrable bush which surrounded it.

In thirty minutes the French possessed the town. Jacques de Sores had kept his word, for he was captain in command of the invaders, and they were, like himself, "Lutherans and heretics." His second in command was said to be a renegade native of the province of Navarre, named Juan de Plan, and two former residents of Havana (one a traitor Portuguese pilot) had guided him to the place. He expected to find treasure stored in the fort from vessels recently wrecked on Florida.

Governor Angulo deserted the town, hustling his wife and children and belongings into safety. He made his way eventually to Guanabacoa, the Cubeño village across the bay. There other refugee residents of Havana joined him but they came slowly for Guanabacoa was not the rendezvous they had agreed upon in planning for precisely the contingency which had now presented itself.

Juan de Lobera with his fighting men,—Spaniards and halfbreeds and blacks,—shut himself up in his fort; he had four crossbowmen and six pieces of artillery. Some old and infirm men and a few women and children had taken refuge there with him. He despatched a letter to the governor upbraiding him for his

desertion of the town and asking help which the governor promised by nightfall.

Lobera bravely resisted attacks, which were three times repeated. With the two pieces of artillery that served the fort on the seaward side he prevented the brigantine which had landed the invaders and a larger ship which had now drawn up, from entering the port. He shot down the corsairs' flag from the hermitage near Juan de Rojas' house, where they had run it up. He replied with spirit to the enemy's demands that he surrender. Toward nightfall, however, they burned the gate in the walls around the fort and took up effective positions along these. A little later they set the tower gate ablaze. In vain Lobera and another Spaniard and three negresses endeavored to extinguish the flames with water. They barely escaped with their lives to the adjacent quadrilateral terraplene. Nothing was saved from the tower but a little powder; provisions sufficient for about ten days' siege and all the *alcaide's* possessions save papers and certain valuables in a desk, were destroyed. The enemy again and again demanded his surrender, promising death with daylight to him and those with him, huddled without protection on the exposed terraplene. He however hoping for relief sounded the bugle and beat the drum and fired his biggest gun to indicate to Governor Angulo, if he were within hearing with reinforcements, that the garrison was holding out, that the king's artillery was still in the possession of the king's loyal subjects. As dawn approached Lobera saw that he was surrounded and realized that he was helpless. The French were on every side, drawn up in good order. His people bade him die if he wanted to, but to spare them. Their

arquebuses were burned out and their crossbows without cord. Two of his four crossbowmen were dead. An artilleryman held treacherous converse with the enemy, talking in German. Sores outside demanded to know if the commander of that garrison were mad. Lobera was forced to capitulate, but he did so on honorable terms: the Frenchman promised him and those with him their lives and gave his word to protect the honor of the women. Lobera delivered up twenty or twenty-two persons, some negroes and two Spaniards having made away. The Frenchman mounted upon the terraplene and spread the colors of France over Lobera's treasured artillery! He demanded booty, but there was none; out of Lobera's desk he got only an emerald ring and some silver plate.

Excepting the women and children whom he soon released, Sores confined the prisoners he took with the fort to a lower chamber in Juan de Rojas' house where he had made his headquarters. To their number he added certain persons who had unluckily entered the port in small boats after he possessed it, and into the same cramped quarters he thrust about ten Portuguese who had been captured elsewhere.

Meanwhile, Governor Angulo in Guanabacoa had assembled some ten Spaniards and about forty Indians, and was returning to the relief of the fort when he received word of its fall, which occurred at daybreak on Thursday following the Frenchmen's entrance on Wednesday morning. On learning of this, Angulo fell back on Guanabacoa and negotiations began for the ransom of the town.

Formal truce was agreed upon. The prisoners Sores had taken were permitted to go their ways about the

town on the understanding that they must return to his headquarters each night. The French demanded thirty thousand *pesos* and a hundred loads of *cazabi* bread. The Spaniards offered three thousand ducats,—a sum which excited Sores' contempt.

By the following Wednesday morning Angulo in Guanabacoa had mustered 35 Spaniards, 220 negroes and 80 Indians, armed with stones and clubs. Some came from as far away as Matanzas. Nine Spaniards were mounted. He knew that the French were scattered, some sleeping in houses of the town, some in their ships and some, quite at their ease, lay with their captain in Juan de Rojas' house. Angulo planned to surprise them. His intention was to take that house. Unhappily the Indians he had with him indulged in a savage warwhoop at an inopportune moment and the French closed its door too soon. The Spaniards killed what French they found outside it, in the settlement, and surrounded the Rojas house, boasting what they had done and that they would complete their work on the French inside. Sores' indignation knew no bounds. One of the Frenchmen killed was a relative. He cried out that this attack was treachery and forthwith ordered that the prisoners he had in the lower chamber be stabbed and clubbed to death. Twenty-five or thirty (or perhaps only seventeen or eighteen) then and there expiated the governor's breach of the truce. This butchery done, Sores rushed upstairs and would have killed Lobera, but Lobera defended himself, declared the fault was not his, and another Frenchman disarmed the captain. From an upper window of the Rojas house, at Sores' order, Lobera bade the Spaniards withdraw. Angulo refused, vowing to retake the town

at any cost, but when daylight came the Frenchmen saw the insignificance of Angulo's support. The enemy ships now in harbor brought their guns into action. Other Frenchmen who had been quartered in the hermitage, and the captain himself and those with him in Rojas' house, came swarming forth. Angulo and the Spaniards fell back: their Indians and negroes broke and ran, and they retreated to Bainoa. Sores had left Lobera shut up in the room with his dead and dying compatriots and the Portuguese. On his return from pursuit of Angulo he released him: he had admired him since his defence of the fort, as a worthy enemy, but now he demanded a good ransom for him, the alternative being a forced journey to France. Lobera's friends raised two thousand two hundred *pesos* and he was presently released. He went to Spain, to court and he carried with him extraordinary credentials in the shape of the town council's epic account of Sores' visitation.

Through a Spaniard who had been Lobera's companion in Sores' favor, negotiations were reopened for the ransom of the town, but in the end the Frenchman scorned the paltry thousand *pesos* offered and burned it to the ground. Nothing remained standing save the walls of the church and of the hospital. He maltreated the images on the altars and his soldiers made themselves cloaks of the church vestments. He burned the boats he found in the harbor,—all little craft. He journeyed out to neighboring estates, to destroy them, and negroes he captured, because no adequate ransom was forthcoming, he hung before Rojas' house. He went by night to Cojimar, hoping to find Angulo off guard there, but the governor was some leagues in-

land. He took soundings of Havana harbor and at midnight on August 5th, under a full moon, and with a fair wind, he sailed away. Havana was left "no better off than the Greeks left Troy." "God knows what He is about," the survivors exclaimed, bitterly, in reporting Havana's undoing to their king, but to their mind there was no explanation why no sudden tempest blew to destroy Sores,—Lutheran, heretic, desecrator of church and despoiler of faithful Catholic subjects of the Spanish king.

In their misery the settlers who remained dared to criticise not only the governor that king had provided, but to allege that the crown itself and its council were guilty of neglect in not furnishing them with arms which a garrison sufficient to their protection needed.

On September 29th a patache manned by a dozen Frenchmen appeared off Havana. They represented themselves to be Spaniards, inquired into the state of affairs on land, and being advised truly, they entered the port and took possession of a caravel, with which they withdrew to Mariel harbor where their own ships were. On October 9th these put into Havana bay and the corsairs landed. They did not demolish the rebuilding which the disheartened settlers had begun but they visited outlying estates where they collected hides to add to the considerable cargo of these they already possessed. On October 23rd, 1555, they sailed away, leaving Havana utterly humiliated.

## CHAPTER XV

### SPAIN'S RELIANCE ON MILITARY AND NAVAL FORCE (1555 ON)

*Como sabeis el puerto de la Villa de la Havana es la escala principal de las Indias adonde los navios que vienen de ellas asi del Nombre de Dios como de la Nueva España y otras partes para venir a estos reinos vienen a parar y es necesario y muy importante que el dicho puerto este siempre a recaudo y con gran defensa para que en caso que armada de Francia pasase a esas partes no pudiese tomar el dicho puerto ni hacer dano en el. . . .*  
The Crown, A. de I., 79-4-2, Y 4, p. 29.

*Necesaria y importante cosa es que en el puerto de la Habana se haga una fuerza qual convenga.—*The Crown, A. de I., 79-4-2, Y 4, p. 31 r.

Now, in Europe, the Hapsburg aggregation of states at head of which had stood Charles V., fell asunder, and in 1556 the disillusioned emperor turned his back upon a world that had disappointed him, leaving the kingly crowns of Spain and title to the Indies to his son Philip II., among other items of the greatest heritage Christendom had ever seen. A month after Philip had received them, the treaty of Vaucelles arranged a five year truce between Spain and France. Spain seemed to have succeeded in imposing restrictions on French activity in the new world for in this treaty it was specified that French subjects should not traffic, navigate or trade in the Spanish Indies without Spain's express license: "otherwise doing the contrary it shall be allowable to proceed against them as enemies."

But the treaty of Vaucelles was soon broken; neither while intact did it have any effect upon conditions prevailing in the Caribbean. "The seas," Mazariegos wrote, "are full of corsairs," and, when one fresh from an attack on Cartagena appeared, "poorly indeed," he exclaimed, "do they keep the peace."

In 1558,—France and Spain being at war again,—French corsairs did notable damage all through the Indies. Don Juan Tello de Guzman was sent from Spain with an armada against them and they played tag with him among the islands; he was "chagrined and agitated" by suspicion that friends ashore advised the enemy of all his movements. It was becoming evident that Spain must defend her exclusive title to the new world in a field where she did not comprehend that forts and armadas were of little avail against the mightier force which lies in the inevitable development of trade and commerce. In time, disregard of economic laws was to cost Spain her western empire, colony after colony, and Cuba the last. How narrowly it came to losing her this island three hundred years sooner than it did, events after 1556 at least suggest.

Spain's whole position was untenable. At its base lay the idea that God through the pope had given the western hemisphere to the Catholic King, as His chosen instrument for its conversion to Catholicism, excepting that specified portion of it which appertained to his brother of Portugal. To dwell therein was a favor, vouchsafed by the Spanish crown to Spanish subjects, and only to chosen ones among them; to be allowed to do business in the New World was a privilege conferred by the Spanish crown, again only upon its subjects, under whatever costly and burdensome conditions

the crown might impose. Unless especially licensed by the crown no foreigner had a right even to reside in Cuba,—certainly not to carry on trade there. Obviously, such theories as these could not be maintained in fact, and yet Spain attempted to maintain them, insisting upon them against intelligent advice of eminent councillors who early urged that trade to the Indies be opened “to all the world,” on payment of customs duties only. To maintain them Spain enacted as wise economic measures as she was capable of formulating, but her chief reliance was upon force,—force exerted upon the seas through her armadas and represented in lesser degree upon the land by fortifications.

It was, therefore, becoming that the man commissioned the last of March, 1555, to be governor of Cuba, should be a soldier: Diego de Mazariegos. Evidently there was dissatisfaction with the record which lawyer-governors (de Avila, Chaves and Angulo) had made, and certainly the settlers said they rejoiced to receive a fitting successor to Diego de Velazquez; but that the sword be properly tempered by proximity of the pen, Mazariegos was ordered to appoint to serve with him a lieutenant-governor who must be “a man of letters” (*letrado*). A *Lic.* Martinez was chosen for the post. Salaries of governor and lieutenant-governor were payable from Cuban revenues but, in default of these, by the royal officials resident in Castilla del Oro.

With three black slaves in attendance on him, with a coat of mail, four arquebuses, four crossbows, three swords and still other weapons “for the defence of his person,” among his luggage, Mazariegos set sail for Cuba in the summer of 1555. His ship was wrecked en route. Lieutenant-governor Martinez, his wife and

children, were drowned. Mazariegos escaped with his life and nothing more, reaching Havana on March 7th, 1557. He immediately took Doctor Angulo's *residencia*; Angulo seems soon to have died; he was buried in the church at Havana.

Mazariegos was the man for the job which confronted him,—had any one man been sufficient to handle it. Havana had no doubt been rebuilt since it was no great task to replace the palm-board, thatched *bohios* which Sores burned, in their enclosures set with tropical fruit trees that cast a grateful, though mosquito-infested shade. The church, however, stood desolate, its woodwork charred, its altar despoiled, and Juan de Rojas' houses had been only temporarily repaired. Life was strenuous, as the Havanese lived it amid these humble surroundings. Passing ships spewed forth in that hot harbor criminals and fortune-hunters out of Spain, broken adventurers "shot back from the continents,"—"delinquents from Peru and Mexico and other parts, those expelled for failing to fetch their wives, bankrupt merchants, women who have fled their husbands, friars in lay attire, vagabonds and rascals and soldiers and sailors who are deserters. . . . They fear neither God nor the king's justice!" A roystering, gaming, throat-slitting congregation, gambling for gold in bars, for pearls and emeralds rough from the mines, for neckchains and table plate, so that some swelled with easy gains, while others died heartbroken with loss! They knifed each other, posted defamatory placards, poisoned half-breed wives to make place for new ones, and burned an enemy's house now and then for diversion. Culprits sought asylum in the church; if haled forth to trial, legal procedure was still apt to

stop short of a sentence especially if Governor Mazariegos declared, with an oath, that a dead man had but received his deserts, and bade his kin refrain on penalty of becoming a feast for vermin of the town jail, from troubling him further in the matter. Francisco de Mazariegos, the governor's nephew; Francisco de Angulo, the former governor's son; and Gomez de Rojas Manrique, dare-devil younger brother of the venerable Juan de Rojas, were chief "bad men" of the community until young Angulo found it healthier to migrate into Mexico, and the governor banished Gomez de Rojas from the island, even, it was charged, expressing the hope that the captain of the ship which took him off would maroon him on a desert key to die "an evil death." Another fate, however, awaited him. Mazariegos himself set an example in laxity of morals by living years in union unblessed by the church with the eldest daughter of his predecessor; she was Doña Francisca de Angulo who bore him three children amid her mother's tearful protests. When the clergy objected to his conduct in this connection, the governor impugned the chastity of all of them, especially designating the bishop in the course of his remarks. After her mother's death, however, and when official investigation into his liaison was imminent, Mazariegos married the lady, declaring he had considered her his wife all the time.

Fearing lest the French seize Santiago, as soon as he had despatched Angulo, Mazariegos went to that port and remained there a year. He found the town without means of defence, and provided it with some pikes, arquebuses and powder, and four cannon which he left in charge of a captain. He departed from Santiago for Havana on January 16, 1558, for he heard that corsairs

had threatened to repeat Sores' exploit; instead on the eve of Corpus Christi (in June) after he had gone from there, French rovers took Santiago. So small had that settlement shrunk they refrained from burning it on receipt of 400 pesos.

From mid-June to the first of August, two French corsairs with two captured ships hung off Havana and for forty-three days Mazariegos kept all its scanty population "on a war footing." Even negresses were compelled to aid the watch and rich citizens held horses in readiness for instant service. Mazariegos managed to get a warning to Pedro de las Roelas who was coming up with the plate fleet from Nombre de Dios and he beset the corsairs within sight of Havana harbor and took them. On subsequent occasions inimical visitors were fought or frightened off by Mazariegos' activities ashore. In March, 1561, a corsair attempted to enter Havana and when Pedro Menendez brought in a fleet of seven vessels early in April, another in his charge which trailed along late was captured. Its master, however, saved the hundred thousand ducats in silver which he had aboard by dropping the bullion into shallow water from whence (treasure hunters please take notice!) it was soon brought up again, after the Frenchmen had left the vicinity. On April 19th this same corsair chased another ship into Havana and fired two shots after her as she escaped. Pedro Menendez, still in port, was incensed and sent forth two vessels of his fleet which pursued the rover for three days but the Frenchman made away via the Bahama channel. In view of events like these Mazariegos demanded artillery,—that he might at least reply to insults. Receiving none from Seville he was obliged to provide himself,—from bank-

rupt ships, for instance,—with what cannon, powder and shot he could lay hand on. He in some sort repaired the old fort and it was Havana's reliance for defence, though its ruined tower must still have constituted a fitting monument to Jacques Sores.

Even before Sores' capture of Havana it had been recognized that there must be built there a fort adequate to defend the place, and properly situated. As early as 1551, plans may have been drawn and the intention entertained to commit the work to Juan de Rojas and to the *alcaide* Lobera. In 1556, perhaps because Lobera was suspected at court of not having fulfilled his duty as against Sores, Geronimo Bustamante de Herrera was commissioned to build such a fort as was needed and he made considerable preparation to go to Havana, even assembling workmen early in 1557, but it seems he fell ill. In January, 1558, he was replaced by Bartolome Sanchez, engineer, named to execute plans delivered to him which were signed by Ochoa de Luyando, although it would seem likely that Sanchez drew them since to the copy he used he added his own name and the word *fecit*. These plans were closely followed in the erection of Fuerza as it stands to this day; they included also, however, plans for a wall about the town, and a copy of them has been preserved in the Archive of the Indies (54-1-32). The viceroy of Mexico, who had been previously called upon to pay Lobera's and his artillerymen's salary, and to furnish money for the fort work, now actually sent twelve thousand *pesos* in gold to the royal officials who now resided at Havana, and it was disbursed on the joint signature of the governor and the engineer.

Seville had difficulty in getting together the workmen

Sanchez needed. They demanded high pay and Seville at one time suggested the fort be built on contract; possibly bids were called for. Sanchez considered 100 slaves necessary; the crown authorized a contract for thirty and Seville declared the order so small no trader desired to take it on. Not until July, 1558, although he was ready earlier, did Sanchez get away for Cuba with Seville's blessing expressed in the pious hope that the expenditure he represented might not be wasted money. The crown's attention had been called to the detail that no time was set within which the fort must be finished.

Sanchez arrived in Havana in November, 1558, accompanied by fourteen or fifteen persons to be employed on the work which began on December 1st, following. Sanchez located and opened a quarry, presumably the one near Guanabacoa; he found a spring of water in it. Twelve stone-cutters labored to prepare building blocks. A kiln was built to burn lime. Sanchez had brought implements with him, but no slaves appeared and now the demand was for from fifty to two hundred of them to hasten completion of the fort. The townspeople furnished about thirty negroes, perhaps under compulsion, for wages they evidently did not consider equivalent to the value of the slaves' labor when employed in cultivating food-crops to sell to passing fleets and armadas. The governor, being authorized to do so, brought up from Santiago some forty serviceable "pieces" which had been confiscated for arriving there without proper shipping papers. They were set to work, men and women alike, and presently the governor released those blacks the residents had let out to Sanchez. Mazariegos also com-

mitted to work on the fort fourteen robust Frenchmen of low degree whom he had captured off the north coast in the vicinity of Matanzas; one of these Sanchez killed in a fight and the others eventually escaped. The governor at one time "persuaded" the serviceable natives among those who dwelt in Guanabacoa to work in relays of a third of their number weekly, an arrangement which drew upon him a reprimand from the crown; he was commanded to pay them for what they had done and not to compel them to work against their will. Mazariegos also kept a keen eye out for vagabonds,—presumably the mixed breeds who worried the interior as tramps; he was authorized to compel these to render useful service to the community and he also forced all available occupants of Havana's jail to work on the fort.

As erection of the fort progressed Mazariegos visited it in person continuously to assure progress. He used bad language and threatened blows when it moved slowly or not to his liking. His contemporaries informed the crown that the governor carried no other thought in mind night or day than the completion of Fuerza.

Sanchez had agreed that the site occupied by the houses of Juan de Rojas and by others near them was indeed the proper position for the fort (see frontispiece). He was specifically empowered to purchase the Rojas' houses (which their owner had not been permitted to repair since Sores partially destroyed them), and any others needed; after a commission had appraised their value a surprisingly large number of properties which the engineer listed as necessary were expropriated. I believe they covered not only the present site of Fuerza

but also the *plaza de armas* and even more ground to north and east. To judge by the prominence of the owners of some of them,—Juan de Ynestrosa, Alonso Sanchez del Corral, Diego de Soto and the priest Andres de Nis, and the detail that Ynestrosa's house was roofed with tile,—the vicinity of Fuerza must have been the first preferred residential district of Havana: as was indeed probable considering the breeze and the view it commanded, then even better than now. It was years before some of the owners were from the continent, paid the ducats at which their houses and lots were valued. Doubtless some did not give immediate possession and certainly some of the buildings bought were not razed: for instance, that purchased at this time of Ysabel Nieta was the governor's residence until 1579, at least.

Despite suspicion any student of the documents must entertain that this transaction was made pleasant because profitable to those concerned, the engineer ascribed to it part of the unpopularity which accrued to him in Havana. Certainly the crown received adverse criticism of him from every quarter, to which Seville contributed the information that Sanchez was a strange character with whom nobody could get on. The governor insisted that he was building the fort too high (a hundred feet) and that he proposed so to place the artillery that with favoring wind an enemy vessel might enter the harbor unscathed. His officials declared that he fomented discord and wasted money; his workmen stated that they knew him well and that he was a devil in human form whom they hoped never to see again when, in the summer of 1560, Sanchez received orders to commit continuance of the fort work to Mazariegos

and return to Spain when the governor should command.

The royal officials demanded an accounting of the dismissed engineer for moneys they alleged he had misspent in using workmen and materials to erect houses in town on his own account; he vanished from Havana without rendering it to them. Sanchez's only defence against criticisms of him had been that his letters showed him more occupied in building the fort than in reporting his enemies to the king, and when in the following December he presented himself at court he succeeded in giving the impression there that he had been prematurely discharged. For some time thereafter he exerted himself exceedingly to collect the salary due him for what services he was permitted to render and I believe that later (1566?) he reappeared in Havana to inspect the fort work.

Now more money was needed. It was impressed upon the crown that unless funds were kept in hand work on Fuerza must stop since the residents of Cuba had not a *blanca* to contribute toward it. Mazariegos suggested that he and the royal officials be authorized to help themselves from crown funds aboard passing fleets, as might be necessary to keep the work going. Mazariegos offered his head to the executioner if a penny were misapplied with his knowledge: after Sanchez's removal he alone signed for disbursements until, in the summer following, the matter was placed in the hands of the treasurer and accountant. Mazariegos' suggestion was not accepted but Mexico was bidden to send 6000 pesos more for the work.

At the time that Sanchez left Fuerza a third or more of the foundations had been dug and some four thousand

stone blocks cut. Despite the fact that the governor had assured the king that the two master workmen, named Claros and Ableztra, were competent to continue the work, given the plans and the site as determined (and they made formal oath that they were competent!), he immediately requested that a judicious man be sent from Seville lest either of these two die as had five others of those who came with Bartolome Sanchez.

Eighty or a hundred negroes to work on the fort were so surely expected now that crops to feed them were planted, at first near the quarry, and later, because that soil proved sterile, out beside the Almendares River,—near an estate of Juan de Ynestrosa's, as the critical did not fail to observe. A delay, however, occurred for in all the year following neither the judicious man wanted to take charge of the work, nor the negroes arrived.

On June 11th, 1562, however, Francisco Calona, recommended by the master builder of Seville's cathedral as able and good-tempered, arrived in Havana at the end of an eight months' voyage. The royal officials regretted to observe that he had been drawing a good salary during all that time. Calona continued to draw it at the rate of 800 ducats per annum through a long and hearty life. No time being set in which he was to finish Fuerza he seems to have felt no obligation to finish it at all, and in his ripe old age, thirty years later, he could still think of much that remained to do to it.

Still more money had arrived from Mexico,—making the total appropriation to 1562, thirty thousand *pesos*, of which Calona found nineteen thousand already spent. He began at once to build with the cut stone blocks he

found ready on the site. On March 29, 1563, it was reported to the crown that Fuerza's walls were as high as a man's head despite the fact that Mazariegos had compelled Calona to undo at his own expense and to replace properly part of the work in which the governor insisted he had departed from the original plan. Late that same year forty-eight slaves arrived from Cartagena for the fort work. Money again running out, in December the crown ordered Mexico to furnish eight thousand *pesos* more. This amount was slow to arrive and to prevent the work from stopping Mazariegos advanced pay to masters and men from certain crown funds he happened to have on hand.

During the summer of 1563 Mazariegos built a masonry tower on Morro headland. It was almost thirty-five feet high; its top was a little over eighty-three feet above the level of the sea which fretted the gray rock on which it stood at the harbor entrance. It was white in color and visible for eight leagues at sea. Its purpose was to guide friendly ships into port and to enable look-outs,—sometimes petty malefactors were assigned to this lonely service,—to discover unfriendly vessels ere they approached too near. The tower cost two hundred *pesos* and the crown bade Havana reimburse herself for the money so expended by reimposing a very unpopular anchorage tax which had just been abolished in response to the city's earnest entreaties.

Meanwhile, the Spanish had been making still further attempts to master Florida (meaning the North American continent), in order to forestall French designs to establish a colony there. Such a colony would be most valuable to the French as a base for operations against Spanish finances as represented by the two convoyed

fleets a year laden with bullion from the continents which now regularly threaded their way homeward together via the Bahama channel. A good position in Florida might give the French such command of that channel that not a vessel could return to Spain "without their seizing it."

Mexico, now, not Cuba, was called upon to furnish ill-starred expeditions into Florida. Fray Luis Cancer tried persuasion on the natives there and ended his career under a war club. Don Luis de Velasco sent forth Don Tristan de Luna, to conquer the country not by war but by settlement and trade on a basis of equity. The only effect on Cuba of this expedition was to create a transient market for supplies. Its treasurer, Antonio de Velazquez, for instance, put into Havana in November, 1559, with two frigates, and the governor had to find an additional vessel to enable him to carry off the three hundred head of cattle, horses, mules, and bread and meat, which he purchased. Later, informed that de Luna's men were starving, Mazariegos despatched to them two frigates with provisions acquired without authority on the crown's account, an expenditure which auditors disputed. Velazquez had left sick Spaniards and Indians in Havana's hospital in evidence that Florida had not changed its character since Narvaez' and de Soto's time, and like them, de Luna failed. Similarly, documents of the time show vessels commanded by Angel de Villafaña, governor of Florida, passing in and out of Havana,—only to augment the population of Cuba by perhaps a hundred and twenty-five deserters who with their arms made off into the interior. Mazariegos reported that he had no force available to capture such a body of men, nor is it logical

to suppose that he made any desperate attempt to do so or to prevent them from settling down in Cuba if in Cuba they chose to settle, for Cuba needed population and there are complaints that Mazariegos was keeping what it had by methods described as tyrannical by those persons who, although they had committed no crime, they said, he would nevertheless not permit to leave the country. Mazariegos had a poor opinion of the degree of efficiency which prevailed under Villafaña's command. Philip, informed of Villafaña's fiasco, expressed himself as much displeased and announced that he desisted from all attempt to establish settlement in Florida. He gave as his reason lack of means to do so, but unquestionably the opinion prevailed that since Spaniards could not maintain themselves there, neither could the French hope to establish a colony.

As early as February 13, 1563, Philip was aware how falsely founded was his reliance on their inability, for on that date he informed Mazariegos that the French had actually made a settlement at the very place,—Santa Elena, or Port Royal,—where Villafaña had been the latest Spaniard to fail. Mazariegos received this news,—and news it was, to him,—in October. The following April, responding to what he understood the crown's interest in this matter to be, he commissioned Hernan Manrique de Rojas to go in a frigate with twenty-five men for crew, to investigate into this French settlement, and to destroy it, if he found his strength sufficient to the undertaking. In July Hernan Manrique returned with tidings that the French settlement had been deserted. He brought with him as evidence of his story a French youth as a prisoner, and the stone post marked with the letter R and the date

1561 which "vain emblem," as Lowery calls it, "France had erected to bear witness to her supremacy in South Carolina." Mazariegos sent this stone to Seville.

Mazariegos appreciated the importance of preventing the French from establishing a base for operations against Spanish shipping in the New World. As it was, their vessels were dangerously numerous in Cuban waters. They sought and took supplies where they found them. Worse yet, they not only imperilled life and property of individuals, and, in time, Spanish sovereignty, but contact with their heretical religious doctrines must be officially held to jeopardize the immortal souls of all they contaminated by their proximity. Mazariegos had been feeling that he was old (although he was little over forty years); but thought of French audacity at Santa Elena stirred in him desire to go north in person to dissipate Calvinist hopes entirely, for, even while Hernan Manrique was sailing off with souvenirs of the abandoned first French colony, Laudonniere had established a second one. To obliterate this, however, was a service destiny reserved for that bold captain-general whom Mazariegos praised for maintaining order in his armada,—Pedro Menendez de Aviles.

## CHAPTER XVI

### INVINCIBLE DEVELOPMENT (TO 1565)

*"Anuncian que van a las Indias a mercadear."*

As said, Spain's policies toward the New World were untenable. France would not "consent to be deprived of the sea and of the heavens," and opined that "God had not created those lands (of the Indies) solely for Castilians." The ports of France "from Bordeaux to Brittany and Normandy" teemed with ships that knew the extended coastline of Cuba better than any which frequented the Guadalquivir to tie tamely at the docks of the *casa de la contratacion* and pay there, heavily, for the privilege of doing under the law a business which was more profitably conducted outside it. When these French merchants, enemies though they were of Spanish state and church as well, presented themselves, proffering linens and silks, to barter for hides in Cuba's quiet inlets and along her hidden rivers, the Catholic King's mandate that such traffic must not be, was as ineffectual to prevent it as his official theory that it jeopardized their immortal souls was insufficient to frighten his subjects out of risking eternal damnation while driving a satisfactory bargain with heretics. In Spain at this time religious fanaticism and the Inquisition revived.

As early as 1527 an English merchant ship presented itself off Santo Domingo demanding the opportunity to

sell its cargo there on strength of a treaty, presumably that one existing between England and the House of Burgundy since 1495. Santo Domingo's *alcaide* greeted the visitor with a few solid shots. Between that date and the famous voyages of Hawkins who cited the same treaty to legitimize his ventures, I have no doubt that other traders of his nationality got better welcome among Spanish settlers in less closely supervised ports of the Indies. For many years the Portuguese engaged quietly in unchronicled traffic through lonely harbors, along unwatched rivers; in 1540 Seville complained to the crown that of twenty-five or thirty caravels carrying slaves to La Española, San Juan de Puerto Rico and Cuba, not more than one or two landed their return cargoes of sugars and hides in Seville; the rest sought Portugal's ports. For this state of affairs the crown roundly berated the *casa de la contratacion*; and presently, with just as much remedial effect, he commanded the governor of Cuba to embargo French vessels presenting themselves for business in Cuban ports!

"They advertise that they are going to the Indies to do business." The character of the corsair had changed: no longer always an enemy, intent solely on hostilities, as early as 1549 he was recognized in Spain in his far more dangerous capacity of peaceable friendly trader. The very word acquired the meaning it has to this day upon the signboards of Seville: *Cosario*, an importer of foreign goods, and a man especially to be watched by customs officials! In that year,—1549,—it was planned to send out three armed vessels, two of them caravels, not to protect merchantmen, but to hunt traders: i. e., force of arms was employed to com-

bat tendencies of economic development which are not to be successfully so encountered.

After 1561 communications between the peninsula and her colonies settled into a system of two convoyed fleets yearly, sailing from Seville on schedule over fixed routes. This system of convoyed fleets, intended to protect business, did so but at the same time hampered it, for those fleets sailed no faster than the slowest ship among them and in times of real danger they did not venture forth at all. Consequently, Cuba's lawful sources of supply not only of luxuries but of actual necessities of life became uncertain and insufficient; and in corresponding degree individual vessels no matter what their nationality (the Spaniards themselves evaded their own laws) were more warmly welcomed than before in the unguarded ports by the needy population of the surrounding country. More than one high official informed the Catholic King that it was necessity which drove his subjects to barter with heretic enemies of the crown.

The people in Cuba hardly produced food enough to maintain life in them: and that on a coarse and meager diet. They did not produce any portion, it would seem, of their clothing (even shoes was a large item of importation). How wretched was their situation especially in the interior Mazariegos had discovered when, leaving Havana in charge of Juan de Rojas as his representative, he set out for Santiago on October 1, 1556, on the only tour of inspection he ever made through the island. He found the white population to consist, he said, of perhaps two hundred Spaniards; they were so poor that had he been willing to grant the leave they asked to go elsewhere they would have

reduced even that small number. Bishop Bernaldino de Villalpando, succeeding Bishop Duranga deceased, declared that the Indians were "as though they had never seen Christians" and the Spaniards themselves "died like barbarians." They can have lived very little better. In 1559 the crown sought to raise money (as had been done in 1530) by way of letters requesting loans addressed to prominent citizens: not a colonist responded, their excuse being "the poverty of the land and the scanty profits they obtained in it." At the same time the crown ordered certain clerkships sold which should have been profitable sources of fees: for only one, and that in Bayamo, did any bidder appear, and it sold for a hundred ducats.

Far from producing revenues for the crown, Cuba had become a burden of considerable expense to Tierra Firme and Mexico. *Situados*,—appropriations payable by royal officials out of funds originating there, to meet salaries (like Lobera's) and the heavy cost of the fort work, were now matters of regular course. Customs revenues dwindled, not only because comparatively little merchandise arrived but because the fleets called first at continental ports (at Nombre de Dios, for instance, and at Vera Cruz), and their royal officials made haste to collect on cargoes entire; later what part of these was intended for Cuba presented itself with a certificate that duty had been paid elsewhere and was therefore not to be collected a second time when the goods landed in the island. The rate of import duty was raised from  $7\frac{1}{2}$  to 10% and when, in 1562, the crown ordered duty collected at the port of actual destination of the merchandise, from 11,128 *reales* in 1559, 6,239 *reales* in 1561, 3,219 *reales* in 1562, receipts

in Havana rose to 73,669 *reales* for the period between August, 1563, and December 6, 1564. To receive this money a factor became for a time again necessary: the office had become a sinecure and was, on Mazariegos' suggestion, abolished (1562), its few duties being merged with those of the treasurer and the accountant. These royal officials had, at the governor's bidding, removed their residence from Santiago to Havana. While they had been at Santiago their duties in Havana had been performed there by an *alcalde* and two councilmen; presumably the arrangement was the same in other settlements. They now requested that they be represented at Santiago by an *alcalde* and councilmen to which the king agreed on August 1, 1561.

The rate of duty payable at Seville on merchandise from the Indies had been raised from  $7\frac{1}{2}\%$  to  $15\%$ . Cuba immediately protested and secured (1566) a special reduction (after 1569) to  $7\frac{1}{2}\%$  on hides, which was of real value to her, and on sugar, which meant nothing since the island was producing none that I can discover. This rate prevailed, the concession which maintained it being renewed from time to time; neither did zealous accountants succeed in augmenting it by the more or less fictitious "removal tax" of  $2\frac{1}{2}\%$  which had always been considered as included in the duty paid at Seville. There was no export tax on Cuban products. Cuba did business with other colonies in goods which originated in Spain; Seville complained that this interfered with the fleets' trade and it was (1565) forbidden to make such reshipments of Spanish goods out of colonies into which originally imported, but this was a general restriction, and it aroused such general protest that it was removed. Cuba was also reassured of

free entry for her products into ports of other settlements for another six years (after January, 1568) and the residents of the island remained exempt from payment of duty on goods brought by themselves into Cuba from Spain for their own use and the use of their households.

At the same time the crown became more insistent that what remained to Cæsar must be paid to him. Diego Lopez Duran went to court in the fall of 1567, representing Havana especially. He was not notably successful in obtaining what that city asked: a loan of two thousand ducats for the Chorrera ditch work, appropriation of all fines levied for minor offences to the hospital for ten years, three hundred ducats to be spent to arm the citizens (still fretful under obligation to equip themselves at their own expense), etc.; but instructions issued to him as accountant and corollary provisions represent a reform in the collection of revenues throughout Cuba. Duran was ordered to become accurate and determined in collecting from the country all moneys due the crown; careful records were to be kept, in a three-keyed box along with cash on hand, which was in the treasurer's custody; cash on hand was to be sent to Spain as often as the governor thought available ships safe to convey it. The royal officials were now forbidden to engage in any business; the king remarked that to obtain their entire attention he paid them adequate salaries. In accordance, presumably, with an intention to live up to the spirit of these instructions, Duran asked and the crown appropriated two hundred ducats for Havana's first custom house, an amount which proved insufficient; in 1567 the king ordered the house built as it should be even

though it exceeded the appropriation. The accountant foresaw trouble in collecting tithes (to collect them had become part of the royal officials' duty) from the Bayamo district, where ships' manifests showed an exportation of hides far in excess of those on which tithes were paid; the governor of the island was instructed to report ways and means to assure collection of one hide in twenty, for if such collection could be assured that source of revenue could be farmed out for a lump sum per annum as collection of customs duties had once been. I think collection of tithes was never generally let out, nor locally for any long period. Duran intimated that masters and men, of the ships composing the fleets, engaged in smuggling and the captains general of the armadas were ordered not to prevent the royal officials from collecting duties due to the crown. Later, in 1572 and 1573, the royal officials were further strengthened in their powers: they were in complete charge of crown receipts and expenditures in the island. *Alguaciles* (sheriffs) were ordered to assist them. The only appeal against them was to the governor. The king was particularly insistent that merchandise which foreigners shipped in the fleets without proper entry on the manifests or through third persons without permits must be confiscated and the offenders punished. It must be borne in mind that there was an important colony of "English merchants" at Seville. The royal officials were expected to appear aboard each entering vessel, in person or in their representatives, as became active customs officers. Out of their entire willingness to do so arose friction with governors whom they too often found had preceded them. Mutual charges of "graft" were frequently exchanged.

Bayamo was certainly the center of the most prosperous region. Documents of the time show that cattle had thrived and so multiplied there and through the center of the island that herds roamed wild and were hunted and killed without regard for any consideration of ownership. Andres de Parada, thirty years a resident of the Bayamo district, owner of famous ranges at Yara and elsewhere, complained that persons who owned few or no cattle, chased his and stripped them of their hides and tallow, and after a prohibition from the *audiencia* had proven of no avail to prevent this, he procured a royal *cedula* forbidding persons who owned no herds to hunt any.

Alonso Sanchez del Corral had some three hundred head of cattle on a ranch near Sancti Spiritus and he sought to have Parada's *cedula* (which was general in its terms) applied to the country there. The Spaniards of Sancti Spiritus and the Cubeños of Trinidad complained that this was undue restriction, because, they said, between Puerto Principe and Havana there was no other settlement of any sort and the country was full of ownerless cattle which all had considered themselves free to kill as they could. The hides so obtained were their principal, not to say, sole source of income. The crown ordered that convenient boundaries be drawn for the protection of tame herds, free hunting of wild cattle to continue outside them as before. Accordingly, Mazariegos assigned to Sanchez del Corral a circle of land three leagues in radius from its center (at Las Sabanas de la Habana), title to which he held during the king's pleasure only. He and his heirs, however, considered that range too small for the herds they had, when these were rounded up from Sancti

Spiritus and Trinidad, and they managed to augment their pasture; in 1572 after some difficulty, Alonso Velazquez de Cuellar, Sanchez del Corral's nephew, obtained the king's authority to use for grazing, lands included in a circle of five, not three leagues radius. The three league radius was, nevertheless, the usual measure for ranches (*hatos*). This is the first specific mention of a circular land grant which I have seen among Cuban papers at Seville; it is an example of a system which caused endless trouble in Cuba.

Bayamo was the most prosperous region in the island because it was the most deeply implicated in unlawful business with most active corsairs. The Portuguese, who came up with slaves and wines,—the Genoese,—and especially the French laden with silks and linens, were so welcome along the south-east coast of Cuba that in 1565, of ten ships that were cleared from that port and the ports of Cape Cruz, Manzanilla and Bayamo (with 44,000 hides, woods, etc.) two only went to Spain, or so the king was informed by Pedro de Quesada, representing the city of Santiago. Francisco de Banderas, Mazariegos' lieutenant in Santiago, was accused of entertaining French merchants in his house.

The *audiencia* of Santo Domingo sent many a judge into eastern Cuba to investigate into these illicit trade relations. Santiago and Bayamo complained that the judges were less obnoxious than corsairs of the old school, only in that they did not burn the towns after they had carried off every portable valuable as salary and fees and fines! On arrival these judges assumed precedence over all local authorities, despatched justice in a manner not palatable to them, and bundled citizens and papers of long and costly law suits off to Santo

Domingo for the *audiencia* to pass sentence. One particularly persistent visitor of the sort was Judge Luis de Soto who had already overstayed his commission when the council of Santiago, declaring that he remained solely to transact business of his own, not the court's which sent him, invited him to betake himself to Santo Domingo to report. He went,—when he was ready to go,—carrying some thousand *pesos* in gold with him; he was shipwrecked en route but nevertheless arrived, whereupon the *audiencia* sent over Bernabe de Hortegon, close kin of his and of the president of the court, to deal with the citizens of Santiago for having disrespectfully urged his departure! The *audiencia* had also attempted to name a factor in the east; Governor Mazariegos had refused to recognize him and the crown had declared the *audiencia* devoid of authority in such matter, though it appears that the court's appointee did collect moneys. The royal officials at Havana objected to having what funds Santiago and Bayamo produced, swept off to Santo Domingo while work on Fuerza slacked for lack of funds from Mexico and their own salaries were not promptly paid. The king and the council for the Indies were divided between conviction that the settlers of eastern Cuba were flagrantly breaking the law in their traffic with foreigners, some of whom did business under papers of *vecindad* (established residence) granted them by too lenient councils, and the equally well-justified conviction that the judges the *audiencia* sent over to pass on their cases were exploiting the situation.

When Pedro Menendez reported the existing state of affairs in Cuba to the crown, a *cedula* was issued bidding Mazariegos enforce the law against trade with corsairs.

How deep-rooted, how widely extended, was the evil which he saw and appreciated, and how very difficult to extirpate, Menendez himself was presently to discover in the course of surprising experiences.

The citizens of Havana complained that Mazariegos suppressed the offices of *alcaldes ordinarios*; it seems he was expected to appoint them yearly and failed to do so even when the *audiencia* of Santo Domingo reminded him of his duty. Evidently popular election of these officials had been abandoned on the ground that it occasioned bribery and disorder; in other settlements than Havana, apparently, the town councils now chose the *alcaldes*. The citizens declared that Mazariegos' design in overlooking the appointment of *alcaldes* was to prevent the settlers from enjoying any independent representation before the crown. They charged that the city council was Mazariegos' subservient instrument,—a body made up of his friends and dependents,—and certainly all its communications to the king were pleasant echoes of the governor's opinions. They accused Mazariegos of tampering with what mail service there was, alleging that he took possession of letters intended for his superiors, and prevented persons from going to Spain whom he thought might make unfavorable report there as to his administration. It was said that Mazariegos became intolerable after Bartolome Sanchez asked that a judge be sent from Santo Domingo to investigate his conduct and the king refused to permit the court to despatch one. Mazariegos himself in 1563 asked for six months' leave of absence that he might present himself at court: "I am growing old and ill," he wrote, "and poorer every day." In the spring of 1565 he heard that Garcia Osorio de Sandoval

had been named to succeed him. He asked the king to order that law suits be not accumulated against him during the process of his *residencia* and Philip, mindful of his services, issued a *cedula* to Osorio commanding that Mazariegos be not unduly "molested." It was therefore a foregone conclusion that nothing would come of the investigation into his administration which, however, Osorio's *letrado* lieutenant-governor, the *Lic.* Cabrera, made with all due formality. It was not until the spring of 1567 that Osorio was ready to send the results of it,—three bulky hide-bound tomes,—to Spain. Mazariegos remained in Havana some years after his retirement from office. He had desired to be made *alcaide* of Fuerza, and later he did serve his king again as governor of Venezuela.

## CHAPTER XVII

### PEDRO MENENDEZ DE AVILES (1565-1567)

For Christ our Lord, and the Catholic King,—and the  
plate fleets of Seville!

In 1564 Frenchmen who said they had deserted the French settlement in Florida to escape hard labor there, and were endeavoring to return to France, took possession of Porcallo's "key" and of a vessel lying in its harbor. The following year corsairs, who said they too were from that same settlement, in seizing a Spanish merchantman out of Santo Domingo for Santiago de Cuba, killed a judge who was a passenger aboard. These were not the only incidents of the sort. It was intolerable that heretics be permitted to maintain a nest in Florida from which to sally forth to work such damage on Spanish interests. The Florida settlement threatened grave danger to the Spanish plate fleets and so to Spanish government finances. Moreover, some persons (among them Pedro Menendez) had long believed that it was the intention of the French to arouse the negro slaves of the various Spanish settlements to revolt against their masters, assuring them freedom when French sovereignty should supersede Spanish! Most secretly, that the blacks might not comprehend that they were feared, Menendez had discussed this danger with Angulo when he was governor of Cuba, with the *alcaide* Lobera and with Juan de Rojas.

The council for the Indies, seeing the situation in its large light, now reminded the king that through the pope he had a God-given right to the land the French had dared to occupy,—that Spaniards had many times taken formal possession of it for him (though unfortunately not all the records could readily be found),—and urged him to expel the invaders lest, being left to take deep root, they prove the undoing of Spanish supremacy and of true religion in all the new world.

Accordingly, Pedro Menendez de Aviles was made *adelantado* of Florida on March 20th, 1565. He was also captain-general of the armada “to guard the coasts and ports of Indies.”

This man had long served his king well, especially in the new world, and years before this he had conceived large policies: as early as 1553, “captain of his own ship and experienced on the sea and in navigation of these waters,” he had conferred with the viceroy of Mexico and with the *audiencia* of Santo Domingo upon this very point of the necessity of driving the French from the Caribbean, and his views had reached the crown. While a prisoner among them a year or so before he had been a witness to their acquisitions of sugar and hides. Since then Menendez had risen high in the king’s service, to be “captain-general to guard the route to Indies,” under which title in 1562-63 he saw merchantmen safely across to the colonies and home again just as on previous occasions he had escorted other fleets of traders.

Now as *adelantado* of Florida and captain-general of the armada “to guard the coasts and ports of Indies,” it was given him as his mission to clean the heretic French not only from that land but also, as he had long desired to see done, from the seas aroundabout Spain’s

new world settlements that his Most Catholic Majesty's subjects resident in them and travelling to and fro among them, might be safe from danger to their lives, from depredations to their property and from damning contamination in their spiritual part. He represented, that is, Spain's determination to execute by force her impracticable laws framed to make the western hemisphere the religious monopoly of Catholicism, the political, financial monopoly of the Spanish crown, and the economic monopoly of the port of Seville. On land Menendez met with some measure of success; by sea he failed, because to accomplish all his mission especially in its economic aspect was beyond human possibility.

Pedro Menendez de Aviles was a good sailor, a good Spaniard and a good Catholic. He was able and fearless in his calling; loyal to his king and to his purpose, not to be bought by friends or by enemies; and he was a religious fanatic. "I have vowed a vow to our Lord Jesus Christ that all in this world he shall give me or I shall have, obtain and acquire shall be expended in spreading the gospel in this land (of Florida) among its natives, and so," he wrote to Philip, "do I promise your majesty."

His character may not be condemned at this later date because he was the very embodiment of the spirit of his people, of his time. Historians of those Calvinists in Florida who presently felt his blade's edge when he soaked the site of French settlements in "the flowery land" with their blood, have pictured him as guilty of treacherous, unnecessary cruelty; and his compatriots have not succeeded in defending him as documents in their possession show that he deserves. Menendez did

his duty honorably as it was laid down to him and as he saw it; and always among his own he carried himself like a master of men, dispensing justice on land and sea with a heavy hand, but not regardless of equity. For ten years he passed in and out of Cuba's ports,—powerful, a portent to all opposition, the dominant figure of the decade, here to-day and gone to-morrow but certain to return. Who has seen an eagle cross, high in air over a mountain valley, intent on serious business at his journey's end, recalling how his very shadow, approaching, sent smaller fowl scurrying to safeguard themselves and their pettier affairs, will realize the relation between Cuban matters and Florida's *adelantado* during the years that Pedro Menendez de Aviles was engaged in his effort to obliterate the French from the new world and with them the menace to Spanish sovereignty there which he correctly believed them to constitute, and in his supplementary effort to establish Spanish settlements where theirs had been.

In Cuba Menendez interpreted his instructions to guard the ports of the Indies in a manner not compatible with Governor Garcia Osorio's ideas of the duties and dignity of the position conferred upon him as successor to Diego de Mazariegos. Osorio had arrived at his post on September 18, 1565, and had been formally received next day. His lieutenant-governor, *Lic.* Cabrera, came later, having been delayed, it would seem, by shipwreck.

Conflict between Osorio and Menendez became violent very soon indeed after the governor's arrival in Havana, when a vessel named the Santa Catalina commanded by Captain Juan de la Parra, carrying supplies, etc., for Florida, was detached off Cape San Antonio

from Pedro de las Roelas' fleet and instructed to proceed to Havana to await Menendez's orders. En route it sighted what it believed was a corsair, gave chase and overhauled in Matanzas bay a Portuguese caravel, the Nazaren, trading without proper papers. Captain Parra seized the ship, and, having chased the captain and his crew out of the Matanzas woods where they were seeking to hide themselves and the most valuable part of their cargo, he made them prisoners aboard his vessel, took an inventory of what theirs contained (hides, gold, pearls) and sent his prize into Havana harbor in good order in charge of a pilot named Gonzalo Gallego. Governor Osorio, however, for reasons which were at the time variously stated, questioned the legality of Captain Parra's procedure, himself took possession of the Nazaren as it lay at anchor in front of Juan de Rojas' house where he was staying, and he sold it for 1600 pesos for the crown, a sum the king was advised was far less than it should have been. De la Parra's and Gallego's protests concerning Osorio's action brought them both into Havana's jail; they later alleged that the monotony of their confinement was broken by exposure in the stocks, by beatings, and, in Gallego's case, by a ducking in the bay. He, as they doused him, called on the king to witness how his years of good service were rewarded and the governor, he said, bade him speak a little louder that Philip might hear. In due season the king heard, by way of Menendez's resentful account of the matter; a crop of law-suits resulted. This was by no means the only instance of violent disagreement between Florida's *adelantado* and the governor of Cuba.

Being informed before he left Seville of Havana's

lack of adequate defence, Osorio brought with him four brass cannon, three dozen arquebuses, and munitions. He found the old fort, he said, overgrown with weeds, used as a corral for cattle about to be slaughtered; he cleared the bush from around it, placed a plank flooring over its terraplen and so situated these cannon that with the four already there they might be of service if necessary. Whenever a sail appeared off shore Osorio required the citizens of Havana to assemble along the coast, to prevent any enemy from landing. They resented this service; they objected to the expense of keeping themselves armed and they protested that, being held in town in readiness to fight, they were prevented from properly attending to their outlying estates which had a very keen interest for them in these years that the regular arrival of large fleets provided a certain and very advantageous market for all the food-crops they could grow. Osorio closed all the trails leading into Havana from the west save one,—“the beach road” which doubtless followed the route of the boulevard to Vedado to-day. He built a house, possibly at the inlet now rapidly vanishing from before San Lazaro hospital, to shelter the citizen guards and especially their arms and powder from rains. He early turned his attention to Fuerza where progress was slow for lack of funds (eight thousand *pesos* appropriated in December, 1563, were half spent before they arrived in the summer of 1566), and for lack of labor. Sixty-three slaves were now, he said, engaged on the work; fourteen or fifteen more were busied on the farm out by the river where food for all was grown. “In this land,” he lamented, “people work little, especially the negroes.” The king was not satisfied in his mind concerning Fuerza.

and various persons were called upon to report to him concerning it.

Osorio stated that in an emergency Havana could muster seventy arquebusiers. He did not consider this sufficient protection and asked that a garrison be provided, from troops now arriving but intended for Florida. A garrison of about two hundred men was shortly after detailed to Havana; they were lodged in a hired house, neither fort, evidently, being in shape to receive them. These men came, however, less because Osorio wanted them than because the *Adelantado* Pedro Menendez considered their presence in Havana advisable. Governor Osorio was not informed concerning them when they came nor did they obey him, but rather Captain Baltazar Barreda whom Menendez placed in command of them. It was on Menendez's order that Barreda took possession of Fuerza as its first *alcaide* and placed his artillery there, despite Osorio's protests that the place would not be ready for occupancy for a year to come. When Menendez left the port Osorio arrested Barreda. The captain did not submit tamely; as the governor put it briefly, "many things happened." It was charged against Osorio that he not only encouraged desertion but actually incited Barreda's garrison to mutiny, planning to make Captain Pedro de Redroban,—another of Menendez's own men,—*alcaide* in his stead. Menendez reappeared from Florida in time to nip the scheme in formation. Redroban and seven or eight of his men fled west out of town but he was captured by Captain Barreda, tried and condemned to be decapitated on the *plaza*. His head was to be exhibited with a placard reading: "A traitor to his king and disobedient to his captain-general," but Re-

droban appealed and he and his case were referred to Spain. Possibly not all Redroban's rebellious followers were captured with him, or deported like Gomez de Rojas; certainly not all mutinous soldiers abroad in the land were expelled at this period because two years later Menendez reported that there were deserters among Cuba's outlawed population of disobedient priests, *mestizos* and foreign-born mulattoes (Dominicans), of which the crown authorized him to clean the island, and in 1571 some Florida mutineers were returned to that settlement. Osorio said that reports of starvation and death in Florida induced soldiers en route there to flee into the interior of Cuba; he said that he endeavored to prevent this "with all justice and to avoid scandal," but Menendez alleged that he aided and abetted deserters and this became a sore point of disagreement between the two men. What remained at Fuerza of its garrison after Redroban's mutiny was put to work digging the moat. Osorio having refused to provide implements, Barreda borrowed picks and shovels of the townspeople. By 1570 this garrison had been withdrawn.

Apparently the crown dropped the idea of walling Havana and took into consideration the suggestion that another fort be built instead. In January, 1567, Pedro de Valdes, *maestre de campo*, and Menendez's son-in-law, with other captains of the Florida expedition whose vessels were then in Havana harbor, acting on Menendez's order inspected the seacoast which is now the city's waterfront, and gave it as their opinion that a round tower thirty-seven feet high would protect the shore if erected on the point of land opposite Morro and fitted with six pieces of artillery. Valdes offered

to build it, the men of Fuerza garrison to work on it four hours a day, if the governor and royal officials would furnish the materials. This they declined to do, saying that the old fort as they were about to repair it was sufficient protection until such time as Fuerza should be finished. Such a tower, they said, would only divide the garrison and so weaken the city's defense in case of attack. The officials protested that they had no authority to expend money for a tower at Punta (that point of land). Nevertheless Barreda dug a trench and placed two guns there.

Menendez received even less encouragement in his attempt begun during that same month of January, 1567, to fortify Santiago de Cuba, into which port on one occasion (1565) French corsairs hanging off Cape Tiburon had chased a vessel of his. A site was chosen for a fortification at the harbor's mouth,—perhaps the steep slope to starboard of a ship entering where ruins still cling bleaching. The citizens, who had been clamoring for a wall around their town, but also for a hundred of the king's negroes to build it for them, furnished eighteen or twenty slaves who worked on this fort for a little while, but were very soon indeed withdrawn.

Menendez detailed to Santiago one Captain Godoy with fifty men and four pieces of artillery. What little provision was made for their support was soon exhausted. The citizens kept them through part of June, July and August,—a season when, the weather being prevailingly fair, corsairs might be expected to go cruising. Then their troop disbanded and there is no reason to suppose that it was a matter of any regret to the citizens of Santiago de Cuba: the truth is,

French, Portuguese and Scotch traders with slaves and other merchandise for sale and exchange were hanging about the harbor mouth and off Cape Cruz, and Menendez's garrison was a detriment to business! Frankly, it was left there not only to protect the town against any attempt of the French to seize the port and establish themselves there, but also to prevent the citizens from continuing their active open trade with foreigners whom the law declared to be enemies of their country and the church denounced as enemies of their faith. On one occasion when Captain Godoy and his men took their places beside the guns which were in the bulwark near the wharf with the intention of preventing a French vessel which was already inside the bay from landing its cargo, Osorio's lieutenant for Santiago, Martin de Mendoza, found an excuse to arrest him. It was charged against Osorio that having so disposed of Godoy and, with him, of all opposition to the Frenchman's landing, the citizens of Santiago held a reception to the corsairs in the bulwark beside the unused artillery, mutinous soldiers from Florida acting as interpreters upon that festal occasion!

At all events, feeling between Godoy and Mendoza became more and more bitter. The captain would gladly have left the locality if he could, but his orders were to remain until Menendez sent for him, and Parada who had his superior officer's power of attorney would not alter them; Godoy appealed in vain to the *audiencia* at Santo Domingo for relief, and, finally, fairly caught on the horns of his dilemma, he came to spending part of his time on Parada's country estate and part of it under arrest. Meanwhile, by April, 1568, visiting judges from Santo Domingo had taken Mendoza's staff

of office from him. "They have taken a great weight from me," Mendoza wrote Osorio, in informing him of the matter, but the governor was indignant at this and similar encroachments, as he termed them, upon his jurisdiction. Both Godoy and Mendoza were permitted to attend mass on Palm Sunday of that year. They met at the door of San Francisco church and there Godoy and a companion named Cordoba grossly insulted both Mendoza and his wife, or so the accusation against them ran. They then sought refuge in the church and resisted arrest but were eventually taken, tried by the visiting judges, sentenced by the *alcaldes*,—Godoy to be hung and Cordoba to the galleys,—which sentences when appeal was taken the *audiencia* augmented by adding that Godoy's body should be quartered and Cordoba be lashed! The captain was executed on a gibbet especially erected before the door of the church where he had committed his offence and it is not to be presumed that the quartering of his corpse was omitted. Menendez was no man to take this sort of thing calmly. He instituted proceedings against Mendoza and other citizens, freely charging that it was Godoy's attempt to check illicit trading with the French and other foreigners which cost him his life. Mendoza removed to Cartagena but later in Spain he was cleared of all charges against him. Just at this juncture Francisco de Parada wrote to the Spanish king beseeching royal commiseration on his Indies: "So thoroughly are foreign nations, such as the French and Scotch-English masters of the seas about them!"

There is no denying the evidence that while the settlers of Santiago,—and of all the neglected east end of

Cuba,—continued to pour out to the king their complaints against Santo Domingo for afflicting them with special judges and for transporting them to La Española to answer charges, and also against Governor Osorio for haling them to Havana for legal consideration there too of their short-comings, they meanwhile welcomed into their ports,—into Santiago, Cape Cruz and Manzanilla especially,—what roving traders presented themselves to do business in wines, linens, silks and slaves. They also carried on a lesser, legitimate trade with Spain, with Puerto Rico, with La Española, with Jamaica; with Cartagena, Castilla del Oro, Santa Marta and Nueva Granada, exporting especially hides.

In August, 1567, the king named Don Diego de Santillan to be governor of Cuba, succeeding Garcia Osorio. Osorio had repeatedly asked to be relieved: "My presence here is of no benefit to your majesty's service," he said. All documents,—his commission, licenses to cover transportation of his goods, instructions to proceed against Osorio for his treatment of Captain Juan de la Parra, to hold him under arrest for shipment to Spain, and to investigate another serious charge of extreme cruelty against a prisoner,—all had been made out to Santillan when, on October 24th, 1567, Pedro Menendez himself was made governor of the island in his stead.

Menendez was fresh from exploits in Florida: he had drowned the French there in their own blood. Nothing of their settlements remained,—not as a base of piratical operations against Spanish fleets and lesser shipping, nor as a refuge for Calvinist heresy, nor as evidence of any truth in French pretension to sovereignty in the new world based on claims of ancient discovery. Now he

undertook to establish Spanish settlements in their stead and to succeed in that Osorio had demonstrated that it was necessary for Menendez to control Cuba, just as de Soto had done. Menendez was authorized to exercise the governorship of the island through a substitute.

*Licenciado Francisco Zayas*, who was to have accompanied Santillan as his *letrado* lieutenant-governor, went to Cuba in that capacity for Menendez, arriving in Havana on July 24th, 1568, accompanied by his wife and family. His welcome was tempered by distrust the citizens felt lest Menendez make of Cuba, as de Soto had done, a mere neglected base of operations for the development of Florida at its expense. "All hope for justice," Anton Recio wrote the king, "though some fear that Florida will be the cause of impairment to this island."

As Osorio's *residencia* progressed under Zayas the citizens rallied to his assistance. It was proven that he had not restored their *alcaldes ordinarios*, and that he had compelled them to stand guard along the beach in winter months when no corsairs might be expected to outlive the north winds; but if he used the king's negroes on other work than Fuerza, they remembered that it was to repair the building used as town hall, the jail and the meat market; if he compelled the Cubeños of Guanabacoa to work on the Chorrera ditch, they remembered that the town needed a supply of fresh water via that ditch badly, and the natives had not complained of ill-treatment. If Osorio was suspected of throwing his predecessors in his lady-love's affections into jail, doubtless it was not the first time they had sojourned there; if he gambled, perhaps it was usually with strangers passing through Havana who had

large sums of money to lose to him,—moreover, as Doctor Angulo had remarked, a governor must have some diversion. His bitterest quarrels (those which had told against him) were with persons interested in augmenting the rival settlements of Florida on the strength of provisions taken from the Havanese for which they were paid slowly if at all. Therefore, from Juan de Rojas down, who stated that he had lived fifty-three years in Havana and known many governors, they rallied their influential names to communications to the crown intended to mitigate severity toward Osorio. Light sentence was passed on him on October 27, 1570.

Documents I have seen concerning Dr. Zayas indicate that he was of an orderly turn of mind: he drew up a schedule of charges for notarial services, supplied standard weights and measures, and as far as their selection lay with him he swore into office persons he believed responsible to receive moneys, presenting them before the city council for approval. He made the mistake, however, of coming into conflict with Menendez. For instance, he accused the *adelantado* of forcing their owners to give over certain lots of land on which to found a Jesuit school, for the instruction of Spanish children and Indians as well, including those of Florida, although the transfer of these lots is recorded as an expropriation by the town council. Moreover, Dr. Zayas seems to have feigned to consider himself somewhat independent of the *adelantado* because his appointment as lieutenant-governor antedated that of Menendez as governor, and Menendez had, probably, little or nothing to do with his selection. By spring, 1569, relations between the two had strained to the breaking point. The action taken against Zayas, however, was

based on the city council's charge that he had not put up the bond required of lieutenant-governors. *Procurador* Artiaga made formal protest before the council and the council being in accord with his views as to the gravity of this oversight, Zayas laid down the verge of his office on May 7th, 1569, protesting that it was against his wish to do so. He and his wife were returned to Spain together with other persons against whom the *adelantado* instituted suits. Zayas appears later (1584) in office as judge in the Canary Islands. Menendez then (June 14, 1570), made *Licenciado* Diego de Cabrera his *letrado* lieutenant-governor in Zayas' stead; Cabrera had served Garcia Osorio in that capacity and had the approval of the *audiencia*.

Menendez was further represented in Havana by no less than five acting governors: by Diego de Ribera; by his nephew Pedro Melendez Marquez; by Juan de Ynestrosa; by Juan Alonso de Nabia who was sent to relieve Melendez Marques, but dying within a week hardly interrupted that young man's administration; and by Sancho Pardo Osorio. He had his representatives in the east, as well.

## CHAPTER XVIII

### FRENCH INFLUENCE WANES (1567-1573)

Overseas the Catholic King was now beset on every hand by those forces of enlightenment and advancement against which he had constituted himself a bulwark of opposition: by Huguenots, by Lutherans and by Protestants. Even by *moriscos* in arms in Spain itself and by the Turk, taking timely advantage of the situation to threaten Christendom from the Mediterranean! The Indies became matters of minor interest to him excepting so far as concerned their plate fleets,—his most important source of revenue.

These changing circumstances were to retire France from her historic position as foremost antagonist of Spain: French policy in the Indies, reflecting Catherine de Medici's perplexities as she used Huguenots against Guises, was to become again one merely of individual adventure and general annoyance. These facts were not however immediately perceptible to Cuba.

There it was very evident that Menendez had not succeeded in cleansing the Caribbean of corsairs; instead, their number increased and their variety was augmented by the advent of Hollanders out of the rebel Low Countries and by English. Suspicious sails were seen off Santiago de Cuba in October, 1567. In January, 1568, the king despatched a warning to the island to be on guard. In April of that year a Frenchman hung off Havana but accomplished nothing.

From Havana in June, Menendez himself wrote that he feared for the safety of the fleets. In April, 1570, the governor was informed from Santo Domingo that "Juan Halles, *muy pujante*," was sailing arrogantly west with twenty-four galleons: the "beggars of the seas" were abroad in force on their element. In October, French rovers visited Baracoa and compelled its residents to provide them with *cazabi* and meat. In April, 1572, the crown again issued warnings of French and English corsairs to be expected; in January word via Turin was that twenty-five companies were being raised near Paris, and elsewhere, to take Havana,—after fortifying themselves there the French would proceed to Santo Domingo. In July, 1573, the acting governor at Havana reported that corsairs had taken, at Manzanilla, three ships with eight or ten thousand hides. "The *adelantado* is needed here," he said.

Danger augmenting, interest in Fuerza revived. Work had dragged heavily for lack of funds,—Philip had use for cash elsewhere. Mexico had sent nothing since the eight thousand pesos brought in 1566; revenues of local origin, especially customs house receipts, were being applied to the work, but they were not sufficient. Menendez was called upon to report on the fort before the council for the Indies. He stated that Havana's fort was in such shape that if, "because of his sins," the enemy took it they could immediately finish it and render themselves very difficult to dislodge from it. He urged that three hundred slaves be provided to complete it in two years. The shipping interests of Seville petitioned the crown to about the same effect. Philip expressed impatience, not, as popularly supposed, that Fuerza had cost so much, but that it was so amaz-

ingly slow in getting done. In April, 1570, Acting-governor Ribera sent a statement of accounts, a drawing showing considerable actual building accomplished, and asked for a hundred negroes and ten thousand pesos to finish it. Materials he had, but not hands enough to place them nor money to pay what hands he had. Their salaries were due the men in charge for three months back.

Ribera desired to demolish the old fort. Menendez had reported that in its almost defenceless condition it constituted a menace to the town; nevertheless half torn down, it remained for many years longer. Ribera had eight pieces of artillery in place in the new fort, six of them commanding the harbor entrance and two the anchorage within the bay. He wanted twenty more. The town could then muster a hundred and thirty to a hundred and fifty arquebusiers, and perhaps forty or fifty more fighting men, but the fort, he said, deserved a garrison at least as large as it had once had (of two hundred men), who should, he mentioned, be in command of the governor to avoid such difficulties as Garcia Osorio had occasioned Menendez. For the citizens to defend themselves was a hardship since it hindered them from attending to their business; neither, he said, could he rely upon them for sometimes when he called to arms only half the force he should have, responded. He had sentinels out along the coast from Pan de Matanzas to Marien, with instructions to advise him if they saw two sails or more approaching in company. At Cape San Antonio he kept a sloop in readiness to speed any necessary warning on, to the continental settlements.

In response to this report the king ordered Mexico

to send to Cuba four thousand ducats for the Fuerza work and instructed Menendez to assemble and convey to Cuba a selected garrison of fifty men,—the number the Havana city council, reflecting Ribera's views, had petitioned be sent. He did so. Orders were issued to the royal officials of Tierra Firme to prepare to pay their wages. The *casa de la contratacion* was ordered to consult with Menendez with a view to providing men and materials needed to prosecute work on the fort. The king conceived an ingenious notion of borrowing, as it were, the negroes he did not seem able to procure otherwise: he was willing to grant traders free license to take blacks to Cuba provided they were assigned to work on Fuerza until its completion,—estimated at three years,—after which they were to be at the disposal of their owners, the aforesaid traders. This proposition made little appeal to the traders, unquestionably because of the risk to their property it involved, so a different arrangement was effected in November, 1571, with Juan Fernandez de Espinosa who bound himself to deliver at Havana three hundred blacks (two-thirds males and one-third females, aged eighteen to thirty, from Cape Verde), one hundred to be in the hands of the royal officials by June, 1572, and the remainder by the following December. On July 26th, 1572, he did deliver one hundred and ninety-one; the second instalment of one hundred nine was never received, for they were seized in transit in Santo Domingo. There is indication that this merchandise arrived in Havana in damaged condition, after a hideous passage. Thirteen died of small-pox after landing; they took with them by the same disease ten of the old slaves, and the loss of these trained labor-

ers further handicapped the work on Fuerza. The epidemic ran its course among the whites, too.

Complaint as to labor was now reversed. The Havana officials had in charge more negroes than they could readily feed. The Chorrera farm was not sufficiently productive, not even under the attention of the Cubeños of Guanabacoa hired to work it. Meat and corn had to be purchased and the officials of Yucatan who had at first (1569) been asked for two hundred *fanegas* of corn per annum were now drawn upon for a thousand, a requisition they avoided when they could and met grudgingly when they must. On being informed that his slaves could not attend mass for lack of garments to cover them, the king ordered clothing sent.

Cuba kept up a constant clamor for money, and for more money from the continent. In March, 1571, Menendez Marquez sent the accountant Duran into the east of the island to go over the accounts of office-holders; of the four or five thousand *pesos* which he gathered up as due the crown, three thousand nine hundred and fifty were sent to Havana and expended to pay the more skilled laborers on the fort and to settle with the residents for provisions furnished the soldiery. It was learned that the ship bearing the king's order that Mexico supply another four thousand ducats had been lost; the king was entreated to issue a duplicate *cedula*. The officials considered selling off a few of the slaves with a view to raising cash which the fort work imperatively demanded. Menendez Marquez transferred a thousand ducats out of an unrelated fund and bought what ammunition he could, laid in certain supplies and otherwise prepared the fort as best he was able for

a visit from the French corsairs he understood were off the mainland coast. Fortunately they did not materialize.

Sancho Pardo Osorio, succeeding as acting governor for Menendez, pushed the work on Fuerza despite all odds, even advancing money of his own to keep the men at it when they struck for arrears in pay. The walls now approached the prescribed height. The moat was being dug, as deep as the plans required though only half the width. Still neither money nor corn arrived from Mexico. Not until the summer of 1573 was the situation somewhat relieved by receipt of the four thousand ducats expected; they were swallowed up in settlement of debts and more money immediately demanded. In May of that spring the crown had ordered two thousand more provided.

Ungraciously as Mexico met Cuba's exigencies, the officials of Panama and Nombre de Dios were even more dilatory. Late in 1572 a small sum of money arrived which did not go far toward paying the soldiers of the garrison what was long overdue them. When remittances did come they were in silver and depreciated as compared with "mine" gold from Mexico, and for these reasons Sancho Pardo earnestly recommended that Mexico and not Tierra Firme be relied upon for the garrison's pay.

Complaints that he did not pay for provisions even at prices he had arbitrarily reduced were frequently entered against Menendez. The crown had ordered the citizens of Havana to prepare what meat and fish he needed for his expeditions into Florida, and to aid him in every possible manner. They complied while money the crown provided and what Menendez himself pos-

sessed or could obtain from his friends, held out; beyond that, their interest waned. In response to the *adelantado's* counter-complaints (there were times when the whole Florida venture was jeopardized for lack of supplies) the king issued *cedulas* and more *cedulas* bidding the Havanese furnish what was necessary. They avoided compliance as adroitly as they could, explaining, for instance, that Governor Osorio would not permit them to obey, or that they had been advised to consult with the distant *audiencia* of Santo Domingo first. They demanded a settlement for supplies provided the first Fuerza garrison under Barreda: when the smaller garrison of fifty arrived, they broke out in fresh lamentations that they were nevertheless still compelled to mount guard along the coast, supplying their own arms and ammunition. They wanted, they said through their *procurador*, a governor of their own "who should be neither the *adelantado* nor his creature." In March, 1571, the council of the Indies which was never his friend advised Menendez' removal,—for the betterment of administration and defence,—and the appointment of a governor who should reside permanently in the place. On his return to Spain, presumably in the year following, Philip decided that Menendez could serve the crown effectively nearer home, and he was made captain-general of a fleet to clear the western coast of Spain and the Flanders channel of corsairs, a command he accepted with expressions of discontent at being so separated from Florida. On January 3, 1573, the crown commissioned Dr. Alonso de Caceres Ovando, a judge of the Santo Domingo *audiencia* but at the moment relieved from duty, to make an inquisition into Menendez's adminis-

tration in Cuba, without, however, suspending him from office; Menendez was privileged to answer through an attorney or in person, as he might choose. Dr. Caceres arrived in Havana on November 14, 1573, and made a close inquiry (*visita*) into Menendez's administration; the *adelantado* seems to have preferred not to answer it at all. On December 13, 1573, Don Gabriel Montalvo, knight of the Order of St. James, and high sheriff of the Holy Inquisition in the city of Granada, was made governor of Cuba to succeed him.

Pedro Menendez died in Santander in September, 1574,—the first truly great man to cast his shadow across the island of Cuba. It was not somber enough, however, to drive from her coast and ports which he sought to guard, those heretic traders who were his particular abhorrence. In fine, able and earnest as he was, all for his God and for his king, Pedro Menendez failed in his mission because neither he nor his times recognized the existence of a simple and irresistible principle which may not be so disregarded: the economic law of supply and demand. In America Spain readily obtained political control and as readily maintained it; using Catholicism as an instrument she effected a religious unity to this day not broken: the formulæ of the Roman church are still observed from Florida to the Horn! But in economics her genius met its limitations and because of her failure to learn hard lessons in matters of agriculture, industry, trade and commerce, Spain lost forever all that her sailors, her soldiers and her churchmen had gained for her in the new world. Of this, Pedro de Menendez stands forth in handsome evidence: sword and cross in hand, French policies and French heresies in Florida could not resist him—he

overthrew French political and religious achievement in the Spanish-America of his time; but those nimble traders whose light craft swarmed out of Abra de Gracia with cargoes of linens and Rouen silks represented the mightier force of economic development, and they carried his defeat and the rout of all that his heavy patrolling galleons embodied into every shallow unguarded indentation of Cuba's long and broken coast.



## FOREWORD TO BOOK IV

Material for the history of Cuba from the end of Pedro Menendez's governorship to Drake's passage along the north coast of Cuba is very full and fine, at Seville, and it is to be found in the following seventy-eight *legajos*: 1-1-1/20; 2-1-1/25; 2-1-2/26; 2-1-241/37; 2-5-1/14; 2-5-1/22; 2-5-2/10; 2-5-2/15; 2-5-2/25; 2-5-3/11; 2-5-4/12; 2-6-1; 6-4-1/25; 6-4-2/26; 6-5-8/2; 7-1-1/12; 47-1-14/41; 51-3-106/30; 51-5-12/1; 51-1-12/22; 51-5-14/24; 52-2-3; 53-1-7; 53-2-9; 53-4-9; 53-6-4; 53-6-5; 54-1-9; 54-1-15; 54-1-32; 54-1-34; 54-2-2; 54-2-3; 54-2-4; 54-2-5; 54-2-6; 54-2-22; 54-2-23; 54-3-1; 54-3-2; 54-3-4; 54-3-6; 54-3-15; 54-3-17; 54-3-19; 54-3-23; 54-5-16; 54-6-4; 78-2-1; 79-4-2; 85-3-1; 98-7-8; 139-6-20; 139-6-23; 139-7-1; 139-7-5; 139-7-14; 140-2-4; 140-3-1; 140-3-9; 140-7-32; 140-7-33; 140-7-34; 140-7-35; 140-7-36; 141-4-8; 141-7-1; 145-1-9; 145-5-15; 147-6-1; 148-1-13; 151-2-8; 152-1-1; 153-1-6; 153-4-9; 153-4-15; 154-1-8; 154-1-14.

I. A. W.



## BOOK IV

### CHAPTER XIX

MONTALVO AND CARREÑO (1573–1579)

And now Philip of Spain, representing Catholicism, came face to face with Elizabeth of England, champion of Protestantism,—“Virgin Queen,” whose virginity was less a personal than a national diplomatic asset, signifying (as it did) that she had since her accession re-established and maintained her country’s political and religious independence of Europe, especially of Spain. Nevertheless, the Catholic King had no desire to precipitate an encounter. “The key-note of Philip’s foreign policy,—that which he had inherited from his Burgundian forefathers,—was to keep on good terms with England” (Hume, in Philip II. of Spain). Religion aside, and Philip could lay religion aside whenever it conflicted with his politics, it was better for him that Elizabeth sit firmly upon her throne than that Mary Stuart should occupy it only to make her French uncles paramount, provided Philip could keep Elizabeth friendly, or if not friendly, at least neutral in her attitude especially toward the rebel Netherlands. There Alba was failing to crush life out of the Lutherans and the States of Flanders. Elizabeth, swayed first this way and then that by diplomatic considerations, avoided open warfare as sedulously as Philip himself, but the great conflict for supremacy which must come,

loomed inevitable before them, and just as he plotted her murder, "purely and simply for the service of God," so she while nominally at peace with him loosed on his Indies those most famous raiders of the Spanish main,—John Hawkins and Francis Drake,—who carried the contest into the west in its threefold character: commercial, religious and political.

Philip was slow to move in his defence. Drake's era of piracy began about 1570, but not for fifteen years were the beneficial effects of Spain's well-justified fear of England made evident in Cuba. Faithful record of those fifteen years, between 1570 and Drake's most notorious exploit in the Caribbean in 1585-86, can be but a chronicle of petty events in the colony, enacted under governors of comparatively little worth.

Don Gabriel Montalvo, made governor of Cuba to succeed Pedro Menendez, seems to have left Spain accompanied by his wife and children and a retinue of eighteen servants and three slaves. He entered Cuba by the port of Manzanilla, visited Santiago (making recommendations as to measures for its defence) and went on to Bayamo from where he was hastily summoned to Havana by what closely approximated a mutiny in Fuerza of which Gomez de Rojas, still "incorrigible," seems to have been the ringleader.

From the east on his arrival Montalvo had made Diego de Soto his representative in Havana. De Soto, because he was old, ill and busy, had placed Gomez de Rojas in command of Fuerza and its forty-seven privates and one artilleryman, despite protests that because the captain was a *vecino* he was by law ineligible to serve as a soldier in the fort. Gomez refused to surrender this honor on demand. Montalvo's ar-

rival seems to have brought the doughty Gomez down off the fort's walls where he and his followers mounted guard as though the town itself were a besieging enemy, and his insubordination appears to have escaped more serious penalty than a fine. Nor was this the sum total of disturbance created for Montalvo by the Rojas family.

Between him and Juan Bautista de Rojas, treasurer succeeding Juan de Ynestrosa, deceased, existed the friction that had irritated preceding governors and royal officials bent upon fulfilling the obligations of their office especially as regarded the inspection of ships and the collection of customs duties. It had been repeatedly charged against Menendez's acting governors, even by Caceres against Menendez Marquez in particular, that they tolerated, even profited by smuggling and themselves openly engaged in trade; Sancho Pardo not only had stores in Havana but he maintained agents throughout the island and sent hides to Spain in quantities. Captain-general Diego Flores de Valdes himself was ordered to permit the royal officials to make inspections of vessels of the armada; he obeyed by bidding the officials content their zeal with setting guards to prevent surreptitious landing of goods. The officials repeatedly alleged that the governors were more active in boarding ships than they should be: "These officials," Caceres had exclaimed, when his judicial equanimity was ruffled, "must be so environed that they can do their duty fearlessly."

Governor Montalvo was not disposed to yield anything of his office's prerogatives or of its perquisites. Rojas, the treasurer, accused him and his lieutenant *Lic.* Cabrera of permitting masters of trading vessels,—

for a consideration,—to avoid the law and payment of duties, and of forbidding the officials to appraise goods except in the presence of his clerk, against whose fee of a ducat they said shipowners protested. Repetitions of complaints of this nature in this connection had their effect, for whereas the king had at first ordered that the governor be permitted to visit ships at his pleasure, he later bade Montalvo leave this matter entirely to the royal officials.

Nor was this the only respect in which suspicion was aroused against don Gabriel: he was accused of appointing minor officials to work on Fuerza at salaries which might have been less, of allowing the royal officials no hand in control of the affairs of the fortification, of using the king's negroes for his own purposes, of hiring them out to others (accounts show that some money so earned by the blacks was turned into the treasury), and, in consideration of two hundred ducats paid to him for the favor of selling to Bartolome Morales for five hundred ducats, a notarial office (*escribania de gobernacion*) for which Caceres' clerk Matos would have paid the crown a thousand. Morales received a royal lifehold appointment to that place, under date of November 18, 1567. He was implicated with Montalvo in charges of "graft" in connection with customs collections, by complaints which Rojas, openly and also secretly, repeated to the king with such persistence that by March, 1574, Rojas was informed that the governor had been advised to expect his *residencia* to be taken. Not, however, until the four years for which he was appointed had expired, did the crown on February 13, 1577, name Captain Francisco Carreño to succeed Montalvo. Charges against him in his *residencia* seem

to suggest venality, but he continued in the king's service after he left Cuba in June, 1578.

Although it was Drake and his Englishmen who had taken Nombre de Dios and crossed the isthmus (guided by outlaw blacks),—viewed the Pacific there, its ports and possibilities,—and promised to build ships on that side of the continents to wrest their ownership from Spain, and by August, 1579, Havana knew that "the" corsair had entered the South Sea by the straits of Magellan and coasted as far north as Acapulco at least, nevertheless they were French rovers who most troubled Montalvo and after him Governor Carreño of Cuba. French ships were increasingly frequent visitors at Cape Cruz, Santiago, Manzanilla, Guatanago, and minor ports of that south-east coast.

Documents of the years 1572 to 1579 are full of picturesque accounts of their affairs. The student looking through these yellow pages sees stranger ships rocking at anchor off Cape Cruz,—sees their launches set forth for the rendezvous, with canvas and silks to exchange for fresh meat and the hides which Spaniards had contracted months before to have ready for delivery to them there and then. One sees their negotiations,—the more or less secret meetings, deep drinking, and Spaniards in consultation as to the advisability of killing their French hosts, "seeing that they slept!" One sees the results of business misunderstandings,—Vasco Porcallo's "key" at Sabana burned, or Spanish frigates seized at Embarcadero de Cauto, and the people of Bayamo (disturbed at mass by the news) tumbling out of church pell-mell to ride to rescue their ships,—only to find them gone with the French. One sees French launches ambushed on the Cauto,—by

Gomez de Rojas, blithest spirit I have found living on in all the archive of Seville! To some purpose he missed the evil death on a desert key which Mazariegos wished him; lived to annoy Pedro Menendez into deporting him, to return, to act as governor of Jamaica (as had his brother Hernan Manrique before him), where he handled English visitors roughly, and, no longer an "incorrigible" mutineer in command of Fuerza, he had more than one encounter with corsairs off Havana and Matanzas, and finally at Bayamo, become "an expert and capable person," he was made captain ("as was usual in time of war") against the French: thirteen dead men in one foray bore witness to his prowess in fight. One sees *Lic.* Cabrera sent by Montalvo to investigate into lawless trading: he finds his son implicated in shady transactions, and forthwith confines his attention to inquiry into the morality of slaves of the neighborhood! One sees the local authorities protesting against every attempt to enforce law and order,—their own houses full of contraband goods, their own cattle furnishing the hides with which these were purchased. Francisco Calvillo y Avellaneda, pious resident of Bayamo, could suggest no efficient remedy for such a state of affairs as this, except in the holy office of the inquisition. "I do not know a land," he wrote, "called Christian which is so utterly lost, laymen and clergy alike!" It was worse, he lamented, than England itself.

Montalvo felt alarm. When in 1576 French were with difficulty driven off Santiago, he advised the king that one more incident of the sort would relieve him of all anxiety as to the fortification of that port. In that same year French corsairs almost captured a despatch boat off Havana. "If I had a galley these Frenchmen

would never see France again!" Montalvo exclaimed. "If I had a galley," Carreño repeated, "they should not go unchastised!"

During these years numerous suggestions for coast patrol were made to the crown. Cumbersome galleons such as Pedro Menendez has commanded when he sought to police "the coasts and ports of Indies," were out of date; persons in Cuba recommanded galliots and frigates (Menendez had built frigates at Bayamo which were models for speed), and the council for the Indies hesitated undecided between frigates and galleys. The governor was called upon to report if frigates could be built in Cuba; the Havana council protested that the colony could not assist toward meeting the expense of them.

Neither, Carreño observed, were "the stone and earth of Cuba, made into a fort, sufficient for her defence." The insistent demand through all these years was for artillery. The crown actually relied for guns to arm Fuerza, and so protect Havana, on a project to raise those from Ribaut's ships which were wrecked off Florida! Of seven pieces of artillery in place, not all were serviceable and none of range sufficient to reach the harbor's mouth.

Construction of Fuerza dragged. Calona, ordered "not to raise hand from the work," was accused of attempting to make it "of immortal duration" to keep himself assured of a job forever. Money to meet expenditures on it arrived irregularly. The men to whom pay was due struck, vowing the governor might hang them, but they would not resume work until they got their wages; they bade Calona, the governor and the king's officials build the fort themselves. The garrison

was no happier; their pay did not arrive, the townsmen refused them credit,—although the ladies were frequently more lenient!

As the fort grew, so too in obviousness did its defects. It was too small to shelter a garrison adequate to its defence, to say nothing at all of serving as a rendezvous for the townspeople in case of danger; it threatened to shake down under the recoil of its own guns; its too numerous and too large gates were a dangerous weakness; its parapets were too low to protect men serving what guns it had. If enemy ships should come in close its guns could not accommodate themselves to the range. Built of porous stone the place leaked till water stood in pools on the floor; the reservoir however being of similar material would hold none ("though it rain all year no water tarries there"),—and (although Calvillo y Avellaneda had remarked as much long before) it was realized at this late date that an enemy on Cabaña hill across the bay dominated the fort itself, and the town and harbor it was therefore inadequate to defend. The project to wall the city was again brought forward; the crown forwarded a plan and ordered work begun upon it. Apparently this plan was based upon a report Menendez had made; since then Havana had developed, and, the local authorities explained in delaying obedience to the *cedula* in question, to execute the plan sent meant the demolition of the church and other principal buildings and an expenditure of perhaps a hundred thousand ducats in expropriation of private properties. They could not believe that the king proposed to commence its improvement by razing the town! The governor feared it would never recover if so destroyed.

There is every indication that at this period all the island felt the stir of notable development. It was doubtless due in part at least to general prosperity on the continents for the fleets which now foregathered in Havana harbor,—from Nombre de Dios, from Vera Cruz, from Santo Domingo and from the Canary Islands,—represented big business being done. At given times they poured many thousands of persons into Havana, there to be maintained for many weeks or even months. They constituted a great demand for all the islands' simple products, which (excepting hides) were almost entirely food-stuffs. The pay obtained for these goods was "easy" money, spent under stress in an abnormal market. The whole colony felt the stimulus of this port's hectic "seasons," but felt it in direct proportion to distance intervening. Unhappy Santiago, for instance, would have denied feeling it at all.

Land was by this time pretty well taken up; in the east disputes as to title and usufruct had already given rise to killings and the city of Santiago asked that the governor investigate the situation there. In a series of ordinances which he laid down in 1574, Dr. Caceres prescribed that any applicant for a grant of lands for cattle raising (these grants seem to have been in usufruct only) must apply to the town council within jurisdiction of which the desired area lay, as had been the custom evidently from earliest times. But now he must specify in detail the location and boundaries of the land in question and summon the nearest neighbors, no matter how far distant, that they might protest if they considered their interests involved. Also the town *procurador* must testify that the grant would

not be prejudicial to the public welfare nor trespass upon the rights of third parties. Unless these formalities were met no title was valid. The actual boundaries must be laid off by a party of five persons, two of them representing the new owner, two the neighbors and one the town council which then granted a license to use the land. The person obtaining such license must use it himself; he might not dispose of the privilege. Three years' abandonment of the property invalidated a title. Dr. Caceres intended to end what was evidently a common abuse: the claiming of title to large indefinite unused tracts. Probably he did not entirely succeed for Carreño later suggested that the excessively large holdings of the "first-comers" be "moderated" to accommodate further settlement; he said that in less than a year after his arrival thirty grants of land for hog ranches and many more for farms and cattle ranges had been made, presumably to the west of Havana, for he added that there was no land left available except at a distance of forty or fifty leagues from the city toward Cape San Antonio. Outside actual used pastures the hunting of cattle and hogs which had run wild was free to all, and to preserve its advantages to the people of Havana the Caceres ordinances forbade the granting of titles to cattle ranges within eight leagues of the town. On the other hand, to protect owners of more or less domesticated herds, all hides offered for sale must carry ears attached: it was customary to brand cattle on the ears and the intention was to make hunters show that their game was indeed wild, i. e., unbranded on the ears. Dogs were not to be used in hunting lest they kill calves and so hinder increase without proportionate profit. Licit

exportation of hides amounted in 1578 to about twenty thousand per annum, despite which, the governor said, the herds increased in number, so excellently was the land adapted to their needs. Cattle owners were required to furnish Havana with meat. Caceres endeavored to protect the Cubeños of Guanabacoa against encroachment on their holdings there and declared invalid certain titles Menendez Marquez and the town council had granted to their detriment; and Carreño reported that he took steps to protect the Indians in their rights to land and in the hunting of wild cattle upon which the poorer colonists largely depended, but the bishop informed the crown that the aborigines were "strangers on the soil," exploited by their protectors.

To encourage general farming Caceres provided that land for *estancias* (plantations of food-crops) might be granted within the boundaries of previous grants of cattle ranges, the owners of these to be compensated with extension of territory in some other direction.

The forests which originally stood heavy around Havana had by now been destroyed. When in 1578 the king ordered "in corruptible and very good woods,"—cedar, ebony, mahogany, *acana*, *guayacan* and iron-wood,—sent to embellish the Escorial, they had to be brought from a distance by his slaves (the ebony from Baracoa) although there is evidence that there were originally cedar and mahogany trees about Havana itself, incredible as this may seem at the present day. Shipment of such woods was made in the summer of 1579 and others followed through a period of ten years at least. Similarly, Spain looked to Cuba for masts for ships, since rebellion in Flanders had closed that source of supply. The Isle of Pines was known (pre-

sumably it was "populated" after 1572 with Alonso de Rojas' cattle since in that year it was granted to him for a range) and Montalvo reported upon its forests, but the pine woods on the west coast of Cuba itself beyond Bahia Honda toward San Antonio seemed most feasible to exploit for this purpose.

Montalvo, when he first arrived in Cuba, was especially impressed by reports he heard of rich gold and copper mines known only to a few old Cubeños liable to die at any time; he urged the king to develop the mineral resources of the island and was instructed to investigate and report. Cubeños of the various villages when ordered (in Montalvo's time) to prospect for mines, seemed reluctant to discover any, lest they be compelled to work them as they once had been; so Carreño sent out a prospector to look for silver and had others seek it near all the settlements. Old workings impressed him with the belief that "in the days of the Indians" gold had been found in abundance; of silver, however, he discovered no indications. The accountant Roman suggested that Florida Indians be imported to work mines; he and Menendez Marquez both thought they had merited condemnation to hard labor by their "rebellious and unjust wars," waged on Christians in violation of the allegiance they had acknowledged to Spain, and such a measure would extirpate idolatry there while developing Cuba's mineral wealth. Carreño was also informed of iron, all over the island, "in more than twenty ranges," including presumably those of Xurugua which were a little later named by name.

A copper deposit was found to exist near Havana. Carreño sent a sample of the ore and suggested that

fifty of the king's negroes be detailed to exploit the mine. Presumably its quality was satisfactory for casting into cannon, for the council of war reported favorably upon the suggestion and the king ordered that the ore from this mine be used as ballast, a convenient way to freight it to Spain. In 1580, some mining was done,—enough to arouse the suspicion that the deposit was a pocket, not a substantial vein; and the cost of operation, especially of transporting the ore to Havana, seemed to be prohibitive despite the fact that an assay showed "a fifth part good copper." Other copper mines were known in the Bayamo district, and that city requested authorization to coin *quartos* for circulation in the island only, eleven to be equivalent to a silver *real*; the petition was referred to the *audiencia* at Santo Domingo and was not granted, I think. Only with respect to the Santiago mines was anything actually done. Juan Tezel had had his troubles in working the copper deposits there,—corsairs, hurricanes, shipwreck, law suits, death and disability of his men, were among calamities which afflicted him. In 1563, he indicated a desire to resume operations regardless; he requested that the agreement entered into with him in 1546, be pronounced still valid and after due consideration the crown did in 1571 confirm it, even authorizing him to take foreign-born workmen to Cuba with him. Tezel, however, died evidently before he could take advantage of this confirmation which it had cost him years to untangle from the red tape of official procedure. In January, 1578, an agreement looking to the exploitation of the Santiago mines was entered into with Sancho de Medina Cerezo. Medina died and his partner, Alvaro Clavijo, stepped

into the favorable concession made them, and "having spent himself," or so he said, "upon the expedition" he got away from San Lucar by September, 1579, with equipment and men. When he reached Santo Domingo a ship had just come in robbed by corsairs,—most of the crew had been killed,—whereat panic seized his people and they refused to go on to Santiago since the route they must follow was in control of such enemies. Clavijo returned to Spain, and tried to assemble a second lot of workmen and materials. Death beset him,—his wife, his children, his servant died, and he was alone. Plague was in the land and quarantine regulations hampered him, but he was in Havana in January, 1581, although "with fewer people than he needed." In October, 1583, he asked a prorogation of his concession. Presumably he did not get it for the governor of Cuba being asked to report said that he had accomplished nothing. The governor may not have been entirely impartial in his attitude toward Clavijo: in 1577 on the strength of a paragraph in a *cedula* which was interpreted as authorizing the governor so to do, certain titles to mines in the Santiago copper district were granted at Bayamo by Montalvo's lieutenant there to two or three people who did some actual work. One of them bought in what was left of Juan Tezel's improvements and a workman of his who understood copper seems to have been the chief reliance of these exploiters of the deposits. Hernan Manrique de Rojas became interested. He went down to the mines with twenty-two slaves and grew food-crops, "which is the most necessary thing," the governor remarked, "that the work people may have enough to eat." One Manuel Nuñez Lobo ("a fugitive") sent

some twenty slaves from Santo Domingo,—possibly his contribution to a partnership with Hernan Manrique, but, the governor concluded, in reviewing the matter up to May, 1587, no copper had as yet been seen as results of their activities. This, he knew, was no fault of the mines, "for there is so much metal and the mines are so numerous they could supply the world with copper; only lately there was news of a new mine of even better metal than the rest." Presently (in years beyond the scope of this book), the crown undertook the development of the Santiago mines. Manuel Nuñez Lobo, "a merchant of Santo Domingo," was found in sole possession of them and of their few buildings and planted crops. He had acquired their titles from those who got them at Bayamo; since it was therein specified that these titles were subject to the crown's approval, he was ousted without difficulty. The mines were worked after 1599 to some effect.

Governor Carreño, who arrived in Havana before April, 1577, had decided by the following December to erect an upper story atop Fuerza. The fort was now about done. He explained to the king that this upper story was necessary as sleeping quarters for the garrison: he had victualled the place and ordered the men to sleep inside it. He foresaw that this reform would be unpopular, for they were welcome in beds outside; he urged that the men's pay be made forthcoming with more than usual promptitude or he could maintain no garrison in Fuerza at all. Further, this upper story was needed as a warehouse in which to keep the powder and arms dry (Fuerza itself was too damp!) and it could be so built as to prevent an enemy gazing from the vantage of the hill across the harbor from seeing

everything that transpired within the fort. The truth was that Carreño wanted the accommodations he proposed to arrange,—“a house,” sixty-five by sixteen feet with four windows to the harbor,—as a residence for himself instead of that *bohio* near the fort which he was expected to occupy. Expropriated in 1559, and then bought in to be demolished to clear space around Fuerza, it had not yet been paid for, nor removed, but was used instead by his predecessors and himself as a dwelling. Other houses expropriated at the time were still standing and Carreño urged that they all be cleared away to give Fuerza’s *plaza de armas* proper contour. He meanwhile worked to complete the upper story of the fort and determined to move in, despite the royal officials’ protests that the superstructure he had added would become a dangerous nuisance were the fort attacked.

The royal officials at once acquired new interest in the custom house (see frontispiece). The *cedula* of January 12, 1576, ordering its erection had not been acted upon, but in October, 1577, the governor and royal officials agreed upon a site, at the water’s edge, beside the wharf and commanding the entrance to the harbor; the town was supposed to own the land, though later a question of title and law suits developed, and it offered a good rock foundation. Plans calling for a seventy-foot building of two stories were approved; the lower floor was to be a forty-foot warehouse, plus a fifteen-foot office and an entrance as spacious while the upper floor was to be used as a residence, presumably of one at least of the royal officials. The specifications included a corral for slaves. Materials left over from Fuerza were available; ten of the king’s negroes were

set to building. The carpentry and brickwork were let on contract and the work progressed, despite the protests of some captious persons that the officials were spending "splendidly" and the second story was entirely unnecessary as far as the king's business to be transacted in a custom house was concerned.

Nor were these the only improvements made. The tariff had been lowered to  $2\frac{1}{2}\%$  *ad valorem* on importations; in 1579 the crown was persuaded to permit collection to be resumed at the old rate of 10%, of which  $7\frac{1}{2}\%$  was to be expended on public improvements.

Havana was growing. To make room for its expansion Caceres' ordinances provided that land granted for farming purposes might be resumed if wanted for town lots. When town lots were assigned to solicitants, representatives of the council must be present as the boundary lines were drawn, and the ordinances required that the city streets be kept straight and that good substantial buildings be encouraged. Half the buildings now were of adobe instead of palm-board, but thatched roofs were still more numerous than tile. Failure to improve a lot within six months forfeited title to it.

The free blacks felt the pressure of the city's growth. They were now so numerous an element in the population that the crown was at one time advised that the forty in Havana who by 1568 had bought their liberty, "doubtless with the product of thievery," constituted a nuisance in Cuba, and should therefore be deported to Florida. Ground occupied by their homes was wanted and the inflammable character of these huts was brought forward as an argument why they should be removed from what was described as the best part of the city.

Now, too (1574), the crown levied a tax upon free blacks; the governor was to determine the amount of it above the minimum of a mark of silver a year. Philip recited as his reason for imposing this head tax that the negroes had previously paid it to their tribal kings; he decided it was due him instead "because they lived in his land, were maintained in peace, and having crossed as slaves had become free there." I do not recall having seen any evidence that the tax was collected.

There were other negroes who though still slaves nevertheless lived most independently. The men labored at trades; the women ran eating houses and did washing especially for transient passengers of the fleets. They reported their earnings to their masters weekly or monthly. The Caceres ordinances required that these owners take out a license according to which they became responsible for the behavior of their blacks; it seems the washerwomen had a trick of not delivering the clothes by the time the fleets sailed, thus occasioning inconvenience and loss to their patrons who could not stay over for a detail of clothes. Further, it was prohibited that these slaves should maintain establishments of their own; they must sleep in their masters' houses, nor be found on the streets, unless upon their owners' business, after the ringing of a certain bell at night. Ordinarily, the blacks might not bear arms; there were exceptions made in the case of negroes travelling with their masters and on behalf of negro cowherds on the ranges, and, it is significant to note, those free black citizens who took their turn at sentinel duty along the city's seacoast might bear arms then unless there was some particular reason why they should not.

Evidently slaves fleeing one master were sometimes driven to give themselves up to obtain food and shelter of ranchmen who then bought them "on risk," i. e., on the supposition that they were still at large, of masters whom they did not inform of the facts in the case. Caceres' ordinances endeavored to end this dishonesty: they required that runaway slaves be reported when located. Cruel, excessive punishments which occasioned death and suicide were prohibited and inasmuch as some owners declined to clothe and feed their slaves, expecting them to live off the neighbors, it was ordered that "sufficient" food be given to them and that they be provided with at least two outfits of clothing a year.

The council for the Indies at this time advised the king to call a halt on the too prodigal granting of licenses to import slaves into the Indies: there was black rebellion on the mainland (*Nombre de Dios*) and in Mexico and as much was feared in La Española,— "in general in the Indies there is a very much larger population of negroes than of Spaniards." The king forthwith revoked a concession to admit 300 into Cuba which had been granted in 1576. The greatest demand for slaves came from the east end of the island,—in 1579 Santiago was refused a request for a thousand, while at the same time Governor Carreño's advice that another thousand be brought in especially to work mines was, apparently, ignored. Investigation showed the lawful importation of blacks into Havana at this time to be very small indeed. There can be no doubt, nevertheless, that along the south-east coast French, Portuguese and English corsairs were supplying a larger demand.

The hospital of Havana was still in very humble cir-

cumstances: it is described as consisting of two rooms and a desolate chapel. For its support the crown continued to appropriate one-half the fines imposed in the local court for petty offences, and Juan Diaz Aldeano de Mendoza, *cura*, who described himself as of noble birth and decent life, begged through the town on Sundays on its behalf. He gave silk and gold vestments and a silver cup to the parish church.

Two monasteries,—the Dominican and the Franciscan,—had been established and travelling friars of these orders arriving in Havana now found shelter among their own, instead of being obliged to seek it in lodging houses sometimes of ill repute. The buildings were at first humble *bohios*; they improved when the king's negroes were lent by way of royal alms to labor upon them. Each monastery sheltered a half dozen or fewer permanent habitants, but when the fleets came in the number of religious was quadrupled. Havana was unequal to the task of supporting them easily and Fray Francisco de la Cruz, commissary for the Franciscans and guardian of their monastery, and Fray Diego de Carvajal for the Dominicans, sought the king's favor insistently in these years. The Franciscans made themselves very comfortable indeed "on a good site, some distance from the sea," and the people of Havana said they had given them the lot of land occupied and more than three thousand ducats toward their monastery and church; the guardian, however, evidently dissatisfied with its location, for four hundred ducats bought other land near the sea (evidently the site of the present customs house of Havana, the abandoned Franciscan convent) and toward building an edifice he proposed to erect there the king ordered that lumber

and lime be provided at the crown's expense. Both Franciscan monasteries (that of Havana and that of Santiago), and, later, the Dominican, were supplied with a certain amount of oil and wine by the king for many years. The Franciscans asked and seem to have obtained control of the village of Guanabacoa (its Cubeños paid well for the comforts of religion) and this order was placed in charge of other Indians who resided in that part of Havana known as "Campeche ward." The governor received general instructions to encourage Indians to attend the teachings of the Franciscans. The Dominicans also requested the use of the king's slaves. The Dominican monastery of Havana was headquarters of the order over a territory which embraced Porto Rico, La Margarita, Jamaica and Florida. The Jesuits also had an humble establishment in Havana at this period, a "straw" house occupied by four monks, until their general ordered them to Mexico because they had no means of support. Carreño endeavored to raise funds to retain them and there was more talk of a Jesuit school,—evidently that one planned in Menendez' time had not flourished. There was friction between the heads of both monasteries and the bishop, who in selecting incumbents for church offices through the island preferred, they said, "vagabond, apostate" priests; he for his part lamented that the existence of these two monasteries cut down the incomes of his subordinates, for the people could give only so much to religion and it was inconvenient to share it among too many. The governor, at odds with the bishop and by him excommunicated, believed that the guardians of the monasteries should enjoy something of the authority of a court of appeal against such ex-

communication, since appeal to the bishop's superior, the archbishop of Santo Domingo, was a lengthy procedure.

The bishop in these days was *Maestro Castillo* of Salamanca University. Bishop Duranga had died and his mother was endeavoring to collect money due from his estate. Dr. Bernaldino de Villapando who succeeded him in May, 1560, had reached Havana a year later, travelled through the island, and departed presumably for Mexico (perhaps with moneys not rightfully his to take) before the end of July, 1563; he was later nominated to be bishop of Guatemala. *Maestro Castillo* arrived in Havana on March 15, 1570, via Santo Domingo and Santiago. In Santo Domingo he offended the archbishop by claiming Jamaica, because of its geographical position, as part of his bishopric; he carried his point and later visited that island, discord marking his itinerary. Arrived in Havana, *Maestro Castillo* immediately fell out with the royal officials as to his salary: tithes they were collecting were not enough to pay it, and the officials were ordered to make good the deficit. Eventually it became necessary to call upon Panama for a balance due and the bishop complained that he got it in depreciated silver. Dissatisfied with the results of the royal officials' methods of collecting tithes, the bishop undertook, or so it was charged, to collect them himself even on the hides of "wild" cattle: the crown ordered him to refrain from meddling in the officials' affairs. All this was a reflection of Philip's own strife with the Pope for supremacy of the crown in Spanish church affairs. *Maestro Castillo* had trouble with the clergy and made unpopular appointments. He was disliked by the laity

not only because he was strenuous in matter of tithes but also because he sought to reform the colonists' morals: on both points they were always sensitive! He travelled through the island and having seen Santiago, preferred Bayamo for his residence as his predecessor had done despite the detail that his cathedral was in the former neglected city. Bayamo was, he said, the best of the island's settlements; he desired to see a substantial church erected there.

This desire doubtless led him to take a very keen interest in the will of Francisco de Parada. The accountant Duran who was in Santiago when Parada died (May 24, 1571), estimated the estate at a hundred thousand ducats. In his will Parada left certain cattle ranches which he owned between Bayamo and the coast, to be administered for the benefit of a church to be erected of brick or masonry in Bayamo. Among details concerning it he specified that one of its chaplains was "to read grammar to all the children of residents of Bayamo and to any others who wish to hear." Incidentally, it may be said here that there had long been a school-teacher attached to the cathedral in Santiago,—*Bachiller* Sancho de Cespedes was "presented" for the post on May 16, 1523, a former appointee never having taken possession; on March 21, 1539, *Bachiller* Andrada succeeded Cespedes, deceased. Parada's will was a fine fat bone for contention, for the bishop and for local civil authorities, for lawyers and for clerks, conducting suits and countersuits with respect to it: out of it Bayamo had not in Castillo's time got any church at all,—neither the hermitage which the town council insisted was what should be built, nor parochial church as the bishop declared Parada in-

tended, though at various times lumber and tile were prepared with building in view. Eventually the crown ordered what was left of Parada's property gathered together and removed from the control of his executors. What actually became of the herds of horned cattle and the black humans who once "populated" his pastures down Yara way between Bayamo and Cape Cruz, where they used to burn all save a few pastures as a quick means to round the stock up on these, and where Sebastian de Almeyda, overseer, kept open house to travellers bound to and from Manzanilla,—always excepting the bishop and his suite,—is a tale left for them to tell who have the patience to peruse the tomes of manuscript evidence taken in the case.

The churches of the island requested, during these years, alms from the king to provide *retablos* for their altars and other furnishings; he gave more than was actually made effective. Rojas de Avellaneda had roofed the adobe and brick church which its citizens had built for Havana, and Calona drew plans and made estimates for a tower, and the king was asked to furnish lime and brick and slaves to build it and the sacristy. This church had one bell and wanted three more. In other towns *curas* were scarce, ill paid if paid at all, and correspondingly disinterested in their flocks. Through the center of the island the people "died and buried each other" in most unchristian fashion,—Santiago was considered especially unhealthy.

*Maestro Castillo*, "for his conscience' sake," resigned the bishopric of Cuba, and was in May, 1579, authorized to return to Spain. In requesting leave to resign Bishop Castillo painted his flock black indeed, describing them as mostly *mestizos* and negroes, unfit

associates for him who was well-born and educated; they had made against him "the most enormous accusations ever entered against any man in this world," they were incorrigible in their iniquities, and he had developed "a natural fear" of them which so disturbed him that he could not study nor preach nor eat nor sleep,—no sacristan in all the Indies was as miserable as he! It is not recorded that the city of Bayamo, where the bishop had insisted on residing despite orders to make his home in Santiago where his cathedral was, saw *Maestro Castillo* depart with any regret. He had lived and caused others to live wherever he went a life made strenuous with quarrels. He quarrelled with the archbishop of Santo Domingo. He quarrelled with the governors, with both Montalvo and Carreño whom in turn he excommunicated,—“and this is no country,” Carreño exclaimed, “in which to pass a single night excommunicated!” He quarrelled with the royal officials from whom he differed concerning tithes and tariffs. He had scandalized the pious Calvillo by his lack of dignity in dress, shocked him by his claim to be so well lettered that he could have held his own with Augustine himself had that good saint lived in his day, and pained him to a degree by having that part of his salary due him from outside Cuba to make up the inevitable deficit between tithes and its total brought to him in merchandise,—in Rouen silks and canvas, etc.,—which he resold at twice what they cost him. “He buys wine when it is cheap, and disposes of it when it is dear,” Calvillo wrote the king, “and this is the only charity that any man has seen him extend to his flock.”

Governor Carreño fell ill very early (January) in

1579 ("*de cierta pasion de orinas*"); by February his condition had become so serious that the treasurer Rojas foresaw his death and wrote urging the king to issue instructions to the town council as to what course to pursue in such contingency. The governor himself was not unaware of his condition and in March made Rojas captain of Fuerza during his pleasure or, in case of his death, until the king should otherwise provide. Rojas took charge of the fort three days later. Carreño expired on April 27, "and confusion followed, the solution of which was that the *justicia ordinaria* (i. e., the *alcaldes*) of this city (Havana) assumed the government," and all the island remained tranquil. The people of the town informed the king of these events and asked that he appoint as his successor Diego de Ribera who, for Menendez, had governed "with prudence and zeal for your majesty's service and to the satisfaction of the people." Ribera was treasurer of the armada and his apparent popularity may have been influenced by relationship to Carreño whose widow was Catalina de Ribera, and the fact that he was in Havana at the time of Carreño's death.

The governor had summoned his lieutenant, Santiesteban, from Bayamo but the *licenciado* did not arrive until shortly after Carreño's demise. The city council claimed that Santiesteban's authority ended with Carreño's life; the lieutenant-governor denied this, but, failing to convince them, to avoid "scandal," he abandoned exercise of his office until the crown, so he wrote to his majesty, could be heard from, and meanwhile he advised the *audiencia* of Santo Domingo of the situation. In the following July *Lic.* Santiesteban was dismissed from office for having married a

Bayamo girl, thereby, the law presumed, acquiring relationships and so prejudices which made it impossible for him to be an impartial judge.

The *audiencia* of Santo Domingo sent the *Lic.* Gaspar de Torres, a Dominican by birth, as governor of Cuba *pro tempore*, on half Carreño's pay. He arrived October 3rd, 1579. Of his administration little has come to my hand save complaints made, especially by the treasurer, Juan Bautista de Rojas. He was unaccustomed to speak well of any governor he did not bias and this suggests that Geronimo Rojas de Avelaneda stood nearer the *Lic.* Torres than he. The land was, the treasurer said, extraordinarily afflicted under Torres with calamities, grievances and insults. Torres, Rojas said, in a few months did more damage, collected more booty, than all the other governors Cuba had had since its earliest settlement. In his *residencia* later Torres was sentenced to refund more than four thousand ducats improperly collected, and it was estimated that he made some six thousand during his sojourn in Cuba. The crown was informed that he fled to escape the consequences of his administration which fell heavy on his bondsmen.

## CHAPTER XX

### LUXAN AND QUIÑONES (1579-1586)

*“Ninguno de vosotros trata de conservar lo que le toca sino de querer lo que al otro pertenesce.”*—The king to Luxan and Quiñones. *A. de I.*, 79-4-2. Y 5, p. 76.

*“Halle la tierra ardiendo en pasiones.”*—Garcia Fernandez de Torrequemada, *A de I.*, 54-2-3.

On September 1, 1579, to succeed Carreño as governor of Cuba, the king appointed Captain Gabriel de Luxan, who had served him more than twenty years in wars in the Low Countries, in Italy and elsewhere. Luxan's appointment was for four years and his salary the same that his predecessors' had been, regardless of the royal officials' earnest recommendation that it be reduced. *Lic.* Juan de Minas Ceballos was made his *letrado* lieutenant-governor with the usual pay. Luxan did not arrive in Cuba until August, 1580. On the 17th of that month he was received by the council. His administration was one long series of quarrels arising out of the most despicable petty jealousies among the island authorities.

In 1579 don Jorge de Baeza y Carvajal, “a noble,” who had served in Flanders and elsewhere, “and is held to be a good soldier,” was by royal commission made *alferez mayor* in Cuba. Don Jorge had bought the position in accordance with a *cedula* issued in 1559 offering it for sale. He arrived in Havana on May 13, 1580, and was received by *Lic.* Torres. The documents

issued to him in relation to his commission constituted sound claim to "voice and vote" in the city council, and to "a seat in front of and before all the *regidores*," immediately behind the *alcaldes*. They conferred, too, he claimed, the right to wear a sword at sessions of that body "as other *alferezes* do." Immediate protest arose that especially this latter privilege was one not the governor himself enjoyed, but don Jorge seems to have carried his point and so presumably also his sword in council sessions.

At the same time that don Jorge was commissioned a *cedula* was issued to the effect that the royal officials were to be given principal place in council meetings, in church and elsewhere, as was but "decent" in view of the fact that their positions were eminent. Caceres' ordinances (1574) show the treasurer seated upon the governor's right hand and the accountant upon his left. The officials claimed that rich citizens, countenanced by the governor, had been permitted to precede them, an affront they resented because they were the king's servants and there was no man of title nor knight in the country; none, that is, with a right to outrank them. Rich they may have been, but no *vecino* of Cuba had as yet attained to membership in distinguished orders (like that of St. James) nor to even the lowest title of Spanish nobility.

Therefore the small honors of local office were the more to be desired and defended. Hot disputes arose over the question of priority in signing council papers: Caceres decided that after the governor the oldest *regidor* in point of service should sign; next after him the officials and then the rest of the council, and the council clerk last of all. When it came to speaking in sessions

and voting, the royal officials demanded to be heard first; there were not lacking councilmen to remind them that they were members of that body not by reason of their offices as treasurer and accountant but on the strength of quite separate appointments as *regidores perpetuos* similar to those other members held which therefore placed them on an equality with the rest, length of service alone constituting any recognizable preëminence. That debate on differences like these and similar weighty matters might not become too strenuous, Caceres forbade persons attending council sessions to wear sword or dagger (hence the vigorous objection to don Jorge de Baeza's exception from this privation); penalty for so doing was confiscation of the arms, and, in case of the insidious dagger, exclusion from sessions for two months. A speaker who had the floor was not to be interrupted; "temperance and modesty" were to prevail in the course of arguments, and the majority ruled.

The council met weekly, presumably on Fridays, in these years; no special summons to attend regular sessions was required excepting when unusually important business was to come up or elections of *alcaldes* were to be held. Attendance was compulsory, on penalty of fine; but absence from the city as well as sickness seem to have been valid excuses for non-appearance at meetings. The governor, and *alcalde* and three *regidores* constituted a quorum, but if all other members were out of town two councilmen only in addition to the governor and an *alcalde* might act. Special sessions might be called by either *alcalde* or the governor in which case all councilmen must be summoned in person by notary. Even when there was no business to trans-

act the council must remain in session at least an hour weekly, time it was to devote to a general discussion of the public welfare.

The Caceres ordinances provided that the governor and his lieutenant should withdraw from the council meeting whenever that body set about inditing any communication to the crown.

On New Year's Day the *regidores* elected two *alcaldes* from among themselves. Caceres' ordinances provided that in this election neither the governor nor his lieutenant might vote and the crown was especially entreated to approve this provision. *Alcaldes* were not eligible to succeed themselves in office. They were required to execute the council's rulings without seeking to delay or alter them. They remained primarily judges of cases at law. From them appeal was still to the governor and beyond him to Santo Domingo.

The *alcaldes* were required to reside within the town seat of their jurisdiction and to grant audiences every afternoon. They were required also to visit outlying cattle ranges, hog ranches and farms of their municipality to dispense justice there, on which matters they were to report to the council. Tradition hints that these visitations were not too welcome to owners of estates, for sometimes the *alcaldes* were not averse to being reimbursed for their trouble, the amount of the remuneration having occasionally an influence upon their view of the gravity of offences brought to their attention.

Neither the *alcaldes* nor the councilmen received salaries. They were however remunerated by way of fees. The *regidores* took monthly turns at inspecting the meat and fish markets; it was the inspecting council-

man's duty to see that cleanliness and fair weights and measures prevailed. Penalties for infractions of the law in these respects were provided and in cases where they involved corporal punishment, banishment or a fine over twenty thousand *maravedis* in amount, the governor and the *alcalde* joined the inspecting councilman in passing judgment in the matter. Appeal from the councilman's decisions in minor cases was to the governor; from the governor's, it was to the council, but no appeal might be taken until the amount of any fine first levied had been deposited. All cases arising out of infractions of the city's law must be settled within eight days or the accused was automatically discharged without costs. Appeals must be taken within fifteen days and settled within another fifteen. It was Dr. Caceres' opinion that the law's delay in Cuba was a matter demanding reform; he complained to the king that there were altogether too many actions brought "especially for a country where they are handled so inexpertly." To further discourage litigation Dr. Caceres in his ordinances specified small fees to be paid the *regidor*, *alcalde* and clerk before whom suits for violations of municipal law came for hearing.

It is impossible to exaggerate the importance Cuba's residents attached to holding these municipal offices: the pay and the inherent opportunities for "graft" which they carried, while not despised, were nevertheless of less moment to the incumbents than the privileges they conferred of occupying a specified place of honor not only in council meetings, but in religious processions, and at church. If his position entitled a man to carry a cushion or a chair to church, he was not to be bereft of that chair or cushion,—not if he could

prevent it by making the welkin ring about the ears of the king of Spain who, certainly, heard of such matters in as great detail as he could hear of any that involved his empire's rise or fall.

The Rojas were still the leading citizens of the island. Juan de Ynestrosa having died (January 6, 1571, aged about fifty) Juan Bautista de Rojas had, as said, succeeded him as treasurer. Juan Bautista was not the undisputed head of the now very numerous Rojas clan. When Juan de Rojas died, shortly after Ynestrosa, Geronimo de Rojas y Avellaneda, another nephew, inherited the bulk of that merchant's estate. During his life Juan de Rojas had kept open house to Franciscan friars passing through Havana and in his will he sought to continue the hospitality which had made him famous; Fray Francisco de Ribera, commissary of the order in Mexico, understood that Rojas left a bequest to found a Franciscan monastery in Havana and in 1573 protested that such provision had not been fulfilled. Whatever may have been Juan de Rojas' intention, his heir neglected the Franciscans although he applied money to the parish church and shortly after a generous expenditure of 8000 ducats upon it he asked as a reward that the king permit him to import fifty slaves into the island free of licenses, and was refused the favor. Juan de Rojas' wife, Doña Maria de Lobera (who died before 1565) in making her bequests had favored the Dominican monastery of her home, Pontevedra in Spain.

Diego de Soto, a Rojas, was perhaps the most distinguished of the family when Montalvo, landing in eastern Cuba, made him his representative in Havana until such time as he should arrive there. De Soto seems to have come to Cuba in 1529 or thereabouts; he

had raised a large family and he had cultivated to "vineyard and orchard" land which the town council had granted to him; his estate apparently included within its boundaries what are now railroad yards and the terminal station in Havana, title to which was doubtless confirmed to him after his request to that effect in 1569.

Anton Recio, who in 1569 became a *regidor* of Havana in place of Juan de Lobera, deceased before 1560, was the principal man in town outside the Rojas' faction. He owned ranches in many places, and town lots on the *plaza de armas*; in the neighborhood of Guanabacoa his negroes and cattle had long troubled the Cubeños of that village. In 1566 he bought of Governor Mazariegos the office of depositary general for eight hundred ducats; Osorio objected to recognizing him but on December 15, 1567, the king conferred the title on him for life. It was his duty (and his privilege!) to receive and hold for safe-keeping valuables of all sorts (money, chattels, real estate) which for any reason whatsoever passed from their owners' hands and awaited instructions as to disposal. For protecting these against danger (which meant corsairs) he was entitled to  $2\frac{1}{2}\%$  interest on the amounts involved. Formerly, the governors had distributed the administration of such property among their friends,—it was a notorious method of extending profitable favor, for the friends flourished on what was in effect borrowed capital which instead of drawing interest, paid it; and successful litigants and heirs to persons deceased often had very great difficulty in regaining possession of their property at all. Recio as depositary general gave bond and was required to keep accounts: it was charged that he kept them care-

lessly. He was one of the earliest settlers in Havana; he had served valiantly against French corsairs. He estimated his wealth at twenty thousand ducats. His wife, Catalina Hernandez, bore him no children; therefore they legitimized Juan and Maria Recio, his by another mother, who was a Cubeña. This Juan Recio was then made heir to the first entailed estate of which I have seen any record among Cuban papers. Chief treasures of his heritage were a gold-handled sword and a gold-handled dagger and a silver table-service. After these were listed houses and lands and slaves and herds of horned cattle and hogs.

There appears to have been no *alcaide* in Havana since Lobera's death. The post of captain of Fuerza, however, existed, salary 300 ducats per annum, the incumbent to be named by the governor. After Barreda, who served under Menendez, governors had kept this office for themselves and drawn the pay, but Carreño gave it to his fifteen-year-old son, explaining that although the lad was clever in military matters, his incumbency was merely nominal,—he the governor held the key to the fort, locked the gate with it nightly (the soldiers being inside, for the sake of good discipline and the town's morality) and slept with that key under his own pillow! Now, however, Captain Melchor Sardo de Arana was made captain of Fuerza on royal commission; he was subordinate to Governor Luxan, with whom he arrived in Havana (1580). The day after landing he and his wife,—Doña Theodora Oriçat, who presently became bedridden,—his "burden" of mother-in-law of "much quality and virtue," and two dependent nieces, took possession of Fuerza and command of its garrison. The fort was almost done, the captain said;

and entering vessels were (after 1579) saluting it, in recognition of its importance as a stronghold of the king. Nevertheless, it was too damp to be a comfortable habitation. Of the garrison of fifty men, ten were invalids because of the humidity of the place. All were in want for lack of regular pay. The captain suggested that as soon as the fort was finished the slaves working on it should be sold off to provide supplies. Persistent demands for artillery had enlarged Fuerza's batteries but of the fourteen guns delivered to him (not including two which were quite useless) Sardo de Arana considered eight only to be of account. There were some munitions,—thirty barrels of powder, fuse, lead, sulphur, some arquebuses and "a heap" of shot.

Unsatisfactory as Captain Melchor Sardo de Arana found Fuerza its upper story as Carreño had added it was the most imposing residence in town, and it fell to him despite the fact that Governor Luxan was his superior. The governor therefore turned his attention toward the custom house, in course of construction. It was suffering damage by reason of neglect: because of a dispute as to title to the site, *Lic.* Torres had halted work on it. Lumber prepared for it had disappeared. Luxan took numerous depositions to the effect that it was the conviction of all that the building should be completed (although he recorded his opinion that it was so situated it might be considered a menace to Fuerza) and he then applied the fort's negroes and materials to that end. Roof, windows and doors had been lacking. By December (1580) he was planning to move into the building's upper story, which clearly chagrined the royal officials who had intended those quarters as a becoming residence for at least one of themselves.

Duran having died he was succeeded in his office of accountant by Juan Bautista Roman who, in turn, was appointed to the Philippines; his departure had been delayed by Carreño's death. Pedro de Arana succeeded him, arriving on the scene like Luxan and Sardo de Arana in August, 1580, accompanied by debts, it was said, to a total of over a thousand ducats, which Rojas (still treasurer) accused him of increasing by 500 more lost in gambling; Arana also possessed an inclination to find in trade a means to pay off his obligations. It will be recalled that royal officials were forbidden to engage in trade. He was from the time of his arrival accused of doing business, of immediately purchasing a half interest in a vessel plying to Yucatan and of despatching it with a cargo on which duty was not properly paid. By January, 1581, Luxan had begun an investigation into Arana's conduct in this respect.

Certainly Arana seems to have been little pleased with his official position, since as early as December, 1580, he requested transfer to the treasuryship of Cartagena. He said that he had too little to do. Indeed, he was an active character, and part of his leisure he occupied in inditing long and bustling communications to the crown. He had his views on every current topic; he even undertook to raise treasure lost in wrecked ships (corsairs wiped out his expedition) and he entertained plans to "populate" with cattle the island of Bermuda! He became engaged to marry Captain Barreda's widow; she died, and "out of love of their mother" he raised her two sons to be useful men.

Arana was particularly displeased to see Governor Luxan remove from the *bohios* near Fuerza which had

been the governor's residence since Mazariegos' time, to the upper story of the custom house; the accountant held that the king's money had not been spent on that building to extend such hospitality to the governor,—though he remarked at the same time that the quarters in question would serve nicely as the residence of one official (and Rojas had his own house in town). These views, however, Arana was powerless to enforce, so helpless were "humbled officials on very short salaries as against tyrannical governors." Occupancy of the second floor of the customs house was a root of grave differences all through Luxan's governorship. Luxan moved in, was ordered out, and did actually remove, only to return and eventually hold the premises.

By the summer of 1581 Arana was violently at odds with the governor and with the treasurer Rojas, and so, therefore, with the city council which Rojas dominated. Charges and counter-charges were exchanged,—surely enough to convince the crown that none of the trio was to be trusted in any sense or in any capacity. On All Saints' Day (October, 1581) Luxan searched Arana's house, arrested the accountant and placed him at first in the common jail, but later confined him in chains to Fuerza. Captain Sardo de Arana was so thoroughly in sympathy with his namesake (who was however no relation) that he refused to make this arrest, calling Luxan's attention to the fact that there were in Havana sheriffs and a high sheriff to boot. The captain himself thereby incurred the governor's displeasure and was incarcerated in the city hall and Juan Vargas de Ferrer, Luxan's brother-in-law, placed in command of Fuerza. Later Sardo de Arana was removed to his own fort where he passed a month in confinement under his

sergeant, a circumstance which did not, he declared, make for easy maintenance of good discipline thereafter. A royal *cedula* ordering the governor to make a secret investigation of charges against the accountant found Luxan already engaged in that to him by no means ungrateful task. He had discovered in Arana's affairs, he said, "many indecencies," and proposed to suspend him from office as soon as the regular yearly auditing of accounts was done. This investigation seems not to have been so quietly conducted but that Arana was informed of the governor's intentions toward him; he foresaw that he was to be suspended, as he was on March 13, 1582, Manuel Diaz being put temporarily in his place. His key to the royal strong box was taken from him by force. With letters of recommendation of his administration and with friends to bear witness to his allegations against Luxan, Arana one day "dawned absent," as it reads in the Spanish: he had betaken himself to Santo Domingo hoping that the *audiencia* there would act in his behalf.

Captain Sardo de Arana's berth was made almost as uncomfortable for him. Unquestionably Luxan was jealous of the captain's authority; the governor declared that to appoint the commandant of Fuerza should be his prerogative, and the accountant Arana suggested that Luxan's real desire was to control the money appropriated for the garrison's pay. Charges brought against Sardo de Arana are too prettily significant of the spirit which prevailed in Havana under Luxan to be omitted from rather full relation: Luxan said that the post of captain of Fuerza was no place for a married man,—that Sardo de Arana's wife and mother-in-law converted the garrison into a personal retinue; formal testimony

was solemnly taken to prove that the captain himself was "a low person,"—he was, the witnesses swore, an unfillable eater, invariably willing to dine regardless of the quality of his host; in negligee he had been seen at the market purchasing meat for his family's consumption, and he once bought of a street vendor a roasted banana which he consumed there and then, and, it was particularly stated, he burned his mouth in so doing. Sardo de Arana had a faculty for mimicry, and a slave woman gave evidence against him that once in the kitchen of Master-of-the-works Calona's house she had seen the captain, wearing a petticoat and a turban, amusing Mrs. Calona and her daughter with too accurate representations of a woman of the streets soliciting business. The ladies appreciated the show; it is on record that they laughed uproariously. The council for the Indies, doubtless Philip himself, took time to read this sort of information from their American possessions. It is interesting to note that although at this very time the council was seriously searching for Sardo de Arana's successor, that body took pains to inform the king that "it was not known that he had done anything unbecoming."

As early as January 2, 1582, the crown was inclined to strengthen Havana by the appointment for Fuerza of an *alcaide*, competent to command an increased garrison and to assure the safety of the place. Captain Diego Fernandez de Quiñones was selected; the year before he had been promised command of a castle in the Indies, at a salary of 1200 ducats, whereas that of Fuerza carried but 800 ducats, a detail concerning which he complained. He accepted the appointment, however, on April 7, 1582.

Now, in addition to his commission as governor of the island, Luxan had by subsequent *cedula* been made captain-general "for the term of his governorship." Carreño before him had been called by that title, but I believe this was a courtesy reminiscent of his service in the navy. The intention was evidently to make Luxan not inferior in rank to generals of armadas and admirals of the fleets with whom he was associated during their calls in port; the title carried, however, additional authority in military matters, and on the strength of it the governor, or so Captain Sardo de Arana complained, "robbed him (the captain merely of Fuerza) of all save the shadow of such captaincy."

Quiñones' appointment was in conflict with Luxan's as captain-general. Both king and council recognized that fact. The king was of the opinion that governor and *alcaide* should be one and the same person; the council believed the colony had developed to a point to warrant the division of the offices. Quiñones' commission, his instructions and the provisions issued to and concerning him, were an attempt to reconcile this difference of opinion and to palliate the conflict of jurisdictions. The king ordered it specified that the *alcaide* was not subordinate to the governor. The council reported that it had endeavored to make quite clear to both the relation they were to bear to each other, in order to obviate friction. If differences arose they were to be referred for settlement to the *audiencia* of Santo Domingo. On the margin of the council's communication to this effect Philip wrote that in cases at law involving soldiers the *alcaide* was to have sole jurisdiction; when civilians and soldiers both were concerned he and the governor were to have joint jurisdic-

tion. In any disagreement between them the oldest, in date of appointment, of the royal officials of Cuba was to have the decision "because in consulting with Santo Domingo there would be much delay." These matters were shaped into formal *cedulas* dated April 13, 1582, and there is evidence that Quiñones was bidden to speed his departure, for he left Spain without an audience with the king. Governor Luxan was duly informed of these matters and he and the *alcaide* were instructed not to quarrel. Even before Quiñones arrived Luxan began to protest vigorously against his appointment. Things had been disorderly enough, he said, with a captain subordinate to him in command of Fuerza and its garrison; the naming of an independent *alcaide* over a larger number of men was "inconvenient." He protested that his record of twenty-nine years' service rendered him worthy to be vested with full authority. By God and his conscience he assured the king that the governor of the island should have entire charge of it. The people, he declared, were "in tribulation" at the news of the different provision which had been made. The town council entered its protest and Luxan asked to be transferred to Cartagena.

Quiñones arrived in Havana on July 13, 1582, and he took command of Fuerza on the 15th. The fort was now complete, according to the original plans, except for the moat. Soldiers he brought with him seem to have raised the garrison to a strength of 120 men. On the council's recommendation, which the king accepted doubtfully, Quiñones was ordered to employ Captain Melchor Sardo "pleasantly," and to accept his counsel and advice. Accordingly Quiñones made him his second in command and so continued him at 280

ducats pay out of the soldiers' premiums, which caused them to complain and discouraged recruiting, until, Quiñones said, Sardo de Arana's entire failure to attend to what duties did devolve upon him, compelled the *alcaide* to replace him.

Before the end of August Quiñones and Luxan were in conflict over the case of a soldier and a civilian who had quarrelled. There was no reconciling them, perhaps because as one priest said, when the clergy took a hand in the matter, both were competent men, determined to serve the crown, and there was a real conflict between their legitimate jurisdictions. A half dozen big packages of documents at Seville are the record of the disturbance which distracted the colony as they struggled for years one against the other. These papers are replete with picturesque details. For instance, one of Quiñones' garrison (gay with a red silk sash and gold ornaments) paid a vulgar compliment to a girl who, the student is assured, was modestly "covered with her shawl" when he happened to pass her in her doorway: and the governor took formal testimony as to the very words the gallant uttered, to show that Quiñones' men were beyond all control. Quiñones, through the befogging cloud of evidence, shows like a rough soldier of his time, intent upon attending to the soldier's business entrusted to him. He had very great contempt for Luxan's knowledge of military affairs; the governor did not, he said, know how to fire an arquebus "afoot or on horseback!" The townspeople were "hens." Knowing full well where the *alcaide* would be caught, the governor had a sudden call "To arms!" sounded one night when no danger threatened, and Quiñones rushed forth from a certain fair lady's house in elegant attire. "Very

gallant" he was, in his white boots. "Behold," the governor wrote, "what weapons he flourishes in your majesty's service!" The *alcaide* entered no defence: "I am a sinner," he exclaimed, "but I never forced a woman yet!" Wherefore he trusted "in God's mercy and the king's clemency."

As may be surmised, the townspeople of Havana fared ill between these two. Backed as he was by the Rojas, the governor was able to present the appearance of the people's approval, and the citizens were made to seem to protest against the *alcaide*, against his bad manners, against his armed escort, and against his welcoming into the fort certain delinquents to shelter them there from justice. Nevertheless, documents of other tenor purporting to bear the signatures of *vecinos* reached the king, with bitter complaints against Luxan and the lamentation that the crown ignored Havana's communications because Philip held its inhabitants to be merely "a lot of inn-keepers." Some, they admitted, did continue to earn their living by extending hospitality for pay to the people of passing fleets, but there were others who like their ancestors had served the king: "very eminent persons, well born and gentlemen, and other very honorable men, who are above that category,"—of inn-keepers. Havana had, these petitioners said, "endured turmoil ever since Luxan entered upon his administration."

Pedro de Arana had meanwhile reached Santo Domingo and been active indeed near the *audiencia* there. He secured the appointment of a *juez de comision* to investigate certain specific charges against Luxan and to take a general accounting of financial affairs in Havana. This judge was Garcí-Fernandez

de Torrequemada, a Dominican I think,—a fellow of fine phrases (the first example I have found of true tropical eloquence!) who was at the time royal factor in La Española. The *audiencia* restored Arana to his office of accountant and he and Torrequemada arrived in Havana on April 9, 1583. Manuel Diaz, acting accountant during Arana's absence, left Havana "between two days"; he had business on his plantation, but, added Rojas the treasurer in reporting this, "I will not leave though they cut my head off!"

"I found," Torrequemada said, "the land aflame with factional passion; there were open breaches of the peace every once in a while." The governor provided him with one escort when he landed, and the *alcaide* with another; relying on loyalty in Havana to keep him safe, he dismissed both. Both governor and *alcaide* went about with armed men in attendance: "Even before I arrived they had come to the point of sounding alarms against each other and of setting up cannon at street corners advantageous as points from which to attack." "Justice, administration and quietude are lacking."

One of Torrequemada's first steps toward restoring tranquillity was to erect a gallows in the *plaza*, and there it remained while he was in town. He calmed the people, he said, by fair words as well as by threats, and a little later a communication was sent to court wherein citizens of Havana appear to say that in six days after his arrival quiet was so complete in Havana they thought his appointment must have been inspired by the Holy Ghost.

The judge early arrived at the conclusion that it was necessary to remove Luxan from office with as great

appearance of finality as he could compass; otherwise no witnesses would appear against him for fear of consequences should he return to power. He confined Luxan to his house, by an order issued on April 27 (1583): Luxan complained that to this injury was added insult, for ribald jesters played guitars before his residence and sang him ditties, saying "God pardon thee, governor," while Torrequemada fêted his enemies, and low persons who testified against him; among them was one so base as to have been once ordered to act as public executioner! Torrequemada also bade Quiñones consider Fuerza his prison, and from them both the judge obtained a statement of their complaints against each other.

It happened that two *oidores* (judges) of the *audiencia*,—the *Lic.* de las Cabezas de Meneses and the *Lic.* Alonso de la Torre,—en route to Spain, and Captain-general Alvaro Flores of the Mexican fleet were in Havana at this time. With Torrequemada they constituted themselves an arbitration tribunal to which both the governor and the *alcaide* agreed to submit the grievances they had listed. Each in advance of the decision rendered placed his hands folded palms together within the hands of Alvaro Flores and so took solemn oath to abide by this tribunal's opinion, whatever it might be. Matters had, indeed, come to such a pass that immediate adjustment was imperative. "New friendship" was patched up between the two, and both were released from confinement.

Torrequemada as ordered by his commission, continued his investigation into Luxan's administration especially with respect to charges Arana had made against him that he interfered with communication be-

tween the people and the *audiencia* and the crown; that he refused to recognize the authority of that court, and held it in contempt (saying that when it came time to pay fines for disobeying it, he would pass a cap about town to collect money to settle, and if the *audiencia* commissioned a judge against him he would tie his hands and ship him toward Spain in a leaking boat!); that he accepted bribes and, for considerations, countenanced and aided desertion from the garrison in time of danger; and that he interfered with the royal officials in the exercise of their offices. In view of the evidence accumulated against him under these heads, Torrequemada determined to suspend the governor from the exercise of his office in Havana and vicinity until otherwise provided by competent authority. He did not despoil him, he said, of honors or emoluments, but simply forbade him to act as governor in the city or its district. When Luxan showed resistance and an inclination to appeal to the town council, Torrequemada confined him to his house under a guard of six men; Luxan complained that the six drew high wages. Then, as he was about to set out for Bayamo to continue his inquisition there, Torrequemada bade Luxan report to him in a month in that place; meanwhile, he carried *Lic.* Mina with him, presumably a prisoner en route to Santo Domingo to answer there to charges preferred against him. Torrequemada confessed that his idea in taking Mina to Bayamo and in compelling Luxan to follow, was to place distance between them and Havana. Government there devolved upon the town council under Hernan Manrique de Rojas,—presumably the only even approximately impartial man in town.

Luxan sent his brother-in-law, Ferrer de Vargas, to

the *audiencia* to act as his advocate before that court. Meanwhile alleging that her health was poor in Cuba, his wife, Doña Isabel Ferrer de Vargas, went to Spain where she did excellent work on his behalf near king and council.

On August 13, 1584, the *audiencia* reversed Torrequemada's order that Luxan should not exercise his office in Havana or vicinity, and the governor returned to that city. His arrival fanned old dissensions into new flame. The agreement sworn to before Alvaro Flores de Valdes was cast to the winds and Hernan Manrique could effect no compromise nor any show of a desire for one between Luxan and Quiñones. In December, 1584, the *audiencia* reversed its own decision, and upheld Torrequemada's order bidding Luxan refrain from exercising the governorship in Havana or vicinity. The moment this amazing order arrived Quiñones served notice on Luxan to quit the city and its neighborhood, and to betake himself to Bayamo and Santiago, to protect, as he put it, that region against menacing corsairs. The governor was slow to move; Quiñones threatened him with arrest, and he went, first only as far as Guanabacoa. By October, 1585, he had moved east, and he was in Bayamo by January, 1586.

Government at Havana again devolved upon the town council and its *alcaldes ordinarios*, until on December 20th, 1585, there arrived in Havana as *justicia mayor* to take charge of affairs there (but not outside that vicinity) one Pedro Guera de la Vega, whom Quiñones described as a soldier from Florida. He had also served under Menendez in the armada and in the king's galleys. The town council was of a mind not to receive him, but did so after keeping him waiting a few

days. The *audiencia* of Santo Domingo had commissioned him on the strength of a royal *cedula* bidding that court to act as it might consider necessary in the quarrel between Luxan and Quiñones. The *alcaide* reported that tranquillity prevailed both before and after Guera de la Vega's assumption of office, and that relations were friendly between him and the new *justicia*. The treasurer Rojas said that the newcomer was not liked, and that he lacked all aptitude for the office he occupied. The *audiencia* had provided also a sheriff and he and Guera de la Vega had "arrived poor," Rojas explained, "but with inclination to become rich. This is precisely what this land did not need for its conservation." It is hard to decide what Guera de la Vega's character and conduct may have been for in the excitement of events which occurred during his brief administration the documents I have seen make evident nothing concerning him excepting that he was present in Havana.

## CHAPTER XXI

### DRAKE (TO 1586)

" . . . (England's) naval power stood revealed to the world."  
—Corbett, *Drake and the Tudor Navy*, II., p. 57.

In 1580 and 1581 there was news in Cuba of corsairs off Florida and along the shores of Santo Domingo; waters about Porto Rico were said to be "as full of French as Rochelle." The Caribbean about Cuba was "caked with corsairs." They frequented the Isle of Pines, Cape Corrientes and Cape Cruz with impunity. Their shamelessness was such that they burned a ship in Trinidad harbor. "Not a vessel in the coasting trade escapes them." The crown was informed that the French had taken the island's entire output of hides and that legitimate coastwise business had ceased to exist. The seas were unsafe even for convoyed fleets. On one occasion an enemy ship sailed boldly into the midst of a fleet as it was passing Cape San Antonio and made an almost successful attack on the admiral himself. On September 22, 1581, Menendez Marquez came into Havana with fifteen sail,—all that remained of the Santo Domingo fleet. He had been thoroughly bested by corsairs. He confessed himself to be sick and scared,—he had expected to find Havana in the hands of "the enemy." These facts and warnings of English to be expected under "Vingam, Forbuxer" and "Francisco Draques" occasioned renewed appeals to the

crown for galleys to patrol the coasts, and for artillery and munitions for Fuerza. "At present it makes war with its reputation only," said Captain Sardo de Arana in demanding guns for the fort.

When on February 3, 1582, a warning was received from Spain that corsairs had actually set out for Indies from England and from France, Luxan threw Havana into a fever of excitement by burning, "within an hour," those *bohios* standing close to Fuerza of which unquestionably he was glad of an excuse to be rid, and by barricading the streets,—a precaution his critics considered especially ridiculous in view of the fragile inflammable character of the structures scattered along them. He sent in haste to Mexico for powder and for reinforcements.

The king's warning had ordered Luxan to put all Cuba on guard. He was to review men available for defence and to report on their number in each village,—Spaniards, *mestizos*, mulattoes and Indians. In Havana Luxan said the call to arms brought out 206 good arquebusiers and twenty lancers. Guanabacoa furnished fifty men of very mixed blood who assembled under a captain of their own. These the accountant Arana considered "miserable and useless people, unaccustomed to arms." As for Fuerza's garrison, according to his point of view the men were of low character, and so sick because of the dampness of the fort that not twelve in all were in fit condition to fight.

The *alcaide* Quiñones had expected to take 150 soldiers to Havana with him. Instead, he brought about 70 (young and inexperienced, Luxan said) so raising the total strength of the garrison there to 120

only. Two cannon and certain munitions and arms were received from Spain in June, 1582; and the governor and royal officials purchased meantime four pieces of artillery and some powder from a ship.

Quiñones, assuming office in August, took military affairs in hand vigorously. He sought to remedy what defects in Fuerza were remediable; he built a stairway within the fort and protected it from the sea by a break-water. He set out sentinels, looked well to patrols, and built a platform and dug trenches at Punta. When a storm and heavy seas charging across that promontory disarranged his platform and flooded his trenches, his enemies rejoiced that part at least of the *alcaide's* "impudent works" had fallen in. By January, 1584, he had a somewhat substantial fort built there and eight guns in place. As for disciplining the garrison, according to the Franciscans, out of his own "abundant Christianity" he made his men almost priestly in their piety! The town council, on the other hand, declared that entirely without respect for the municipal authorities they "lived in the liberty they thought convenient" (even to breaking in the meat market doors,—presumably when meat on credit was denied them).

Quiñones insisted that the reinforcements Luxan had asked of Mexico were not needed,—all that was required to assure Havana's safety was to provide him with the munitions he requested. These were sent, but also on February 6, 1583, there arrived forty men, *criollos* from Mexico, and more came within a few days to a total of one hundred in command of Captain Pedro de Guevara. Captain Guevara had instructions to recognize Luxan (not Quiñones) as his chief. The governor described these men as experienced soldiers,

presenting a fine appearance. They came paid for seven months and with provisions for that length of time. At the end of the seven months, their number shrunk to sixty,—and “undesirables,” at that, according to Torrequemada,—they were dismissed, even Luxan concurring, and permitted to return to Mexico.

Again in June of 1585 a despatch boat out of Seville warned Cuba that enemy vessels had left England for an unknown destination. The Spanish were convinced that the English planned to make a settlement in the new world. English traders had come ashore on Porto Rico and actually built a rough fort there to protect themselves while they cut timber and acquired by barter provisions of all sorts, horses, cattle, dogs, birds and negroes; when they departed they left “a writing” in their abandoned fort which was presumed to be a communication to those who should come after them. In September after this episode Menendez Marquez reported ten English sail seen off Florida going north. The conviction grew that the intention was to establish a base there. In July, 1585, stirred by Seville’s warning, a caravel was despatched from Havana to Spain conveying “what certain news” was known in Cuba “as to the English who have come to these parts.” They had indeed made a settlement,—under Sir Richard Grenville and Ralph Lane,—in a land they named Virginia after their queen but which to the Spaniards was still Florida. Their Roanoke was Santa Maria bay, which Alonso Suarez de Toledo described from personal knowledge to be an excellent locality.

Nevertheless, although these facts were known and attacks anticipated, the news was none the less paralyzing in its import which Governor Luxan at Bayamo re-

ceived on January 28, 1586: Sir Francis Drake with a formidable armada had taken the city of Santo Domingo on the 10th preceding, and held it yet!

"The corsair's" capture of the capital of Philip's Caribbean possessions was Elizabeth's announcement that a state of war existed between herself and the Catholic King. The traditional amity which for centuries had prevailed between England and the house of Burgundy was broken at last by the rising might of the new Mistress of the Seas. Drake now was no mere pirate as he had been at Nombre de Dios years before. He was the militant politics, the militant religion and the militant commerce of England, and loot was less his object than was the demoralization of the Catholic King's Indian trade since on it Philip had come to depend for means not only to act against England but to uphold the very foundations of his own prestige.

Two judges of the *audiencia* who had escaped from Santo Domingo sent the news to Cuba via Santiago advising this island to expect a similar visitation.

Within two hours after receipt of this intelligence, Luxan had despatched messengers to warn Havana and to bid all the intervening settlements muster men to reinforce that place. By sea immediately Hernan Manrique set out for Havana with Bayamo's first contribution of reinforcements. Luxan forwarded a boat-load of supplies within a few days. Hernan Manrique carried a letter from Luxan to Quiñones expressing the governor's views as to what should be done in this emergency. Luxan bade the royal officials appeal to Mexico for help and to send tidings to the king in Spain. This was done. From Santiago he also sent two ships to Seville with the news, and he sought to warn Car-

tagena. French corsairs captured some of his despatches.

The island settlements responded to the governor's appeal for men. Under Captain Juan Ferrer de Vargas, his brother-in-law, Bayamo sent 88; under Captain Diego Lopez Quiros, Puerto Principe sent 49; under Captain Hernando Pelaez, Sancti Spiritus sent 51; under Captain Vicente Gomez, Trinidad, "most needy and least populous of all," furnished 21. When (on May 5) the roll of these volunteers was called in Havana, their number was even a little larger, for it is recorded at 211, and Luxan estimated it larger yet, at approximately 230.

Four days before Luxan's news of Drake in Santo Domingo reached Havana, word to the same effect was brought by a vessel out of Bayasa in La Española and the night before it entered a despatch boat arrived from Seville with warning that the corsair had been sighted off Bayona in Galicia with twenty-nine sail moving west. This despatch boat had left Spain with certain munitions consigned to Havana but as it passed Cartagena Don Pedro Rique helped himself to them all. Havana's indignation at his conduct augmented when presently it became known how poorly Cartegena defended herself against the enemy. In recompense, Havana seized half of a lot of munitions and all the fuse of a shipment en route to Mexico.

Days of feverish activity followed. In the face of real danger jealousies and disagreements seemed for the moment forgotten. From Bayamo, regretting that the emergency found him outside Havana, but resolved to serve the king nevertheless where he was, Luxan reported everybody to be "in a becoming humor" and

with expectation to see the audacious enemy punished as became so powerful and Christian a king as Spain's. In Havana Quiñones declared that all were a unit in the peace and friendship "suitable" to the occasion. The treasurer Rojas was, so he himself said, the first to shoulder his shovel and lay-to on manual labor to entrench the town, thanks to which good example, "none desired to be excused." The Dominican monks animated the people by displaying the sacred banner of Our Lady of the Rosary. Pedro Guera de la Vega, saying that now that he had a chance he would demonstrate that the crown had not fed him sixteen years for nothing, described to the king the measures being taken to place Havana in defence. He had, he said, called in "out of the woods" many persons who had been hiding from justice because of quarrels, debts, etc.; he assured them against arrest and also against pursuit (once the danger was over) for fifteen days after they should have again left Havana for their asylums in the wilderness or in the churches. He believed Havana would cause the English corsairs "to repent." Nevertheless, he asked the king to send assistance quickly.

A vessel was stationed off Ycacos Point with instructions if Havana were taken, to speed with that news to Spain. To the west another vessel waited in Puercos River to advise Mexico, if the disaster occurred. Since the enemy might land at Chorrera, a house had been built there to shelter six men nightly with horses near to enable them to ride to warn the town. Between Chorrera and the city there were three or four inlets considered dangerous: one of these was Guillen's (San Lazaro) and the others were between it and Punta. To protect each of these, trenches and terraplens were

prepared and artillery placed. All roads except the shore road into town were closed and along false roads which were opened, pitfalls were dug. Where to-day a macadamized boulevard and electric car tracks pass close under the battery at the townward edge of Vedado, the citizens of Havana in the spring of 1586 prepared to make a stiff stand against any invasion from the west. They carried earth to the top of that hill and built works to shelter themselves on its summit,—an advantageous position from which they could repulse an advancing enemy while enjoying immunity from attack,—and below the hill, through the coral formation of the coast there, they dug trenches to embarrass any force seeking to cross. Guillen's (San Lazaro) inlet was protected by earthworks; on the higher ground on the townward side of it a rough fort was built with two guns on a platform. All available cannon were forced into service,—thirty pieces in all, with Melchor Sardo de Arana in charge of them as to condition, ammunition, etc. Between Guillen's inlet and Punta the bush was cleared away and long trenches dug. Communication over all this distance was facilitated by connecting trenches and a road protected by a screen of "brushwood" thrown up, sufficient to hide a man passing on horseback. Punta with ten or twelve guns was in readiness to offend as well as defend, and for once the treasurer Rojas spoke no ill of Quiñones' handiwork there. A chain of wooden blocks was hung across the harbor mouth, held by a lock on the Morro side. Along the harbor shore between Punta and Fuerza a trench was dug and three guns were placed outside Fuerza in a position to cover the entrance to the bay. Fuerza was hastily victualled now as for a siege. That fort's low

parapets were built up with timbers and earth to protect the men manning its guns. Barricades were thrown up in the *plaza* about it and all buildings (except the hospital, church and custom house) considered to threaten it were removed from its vicinity,—including residences of such principal citizens as Juan Recio and Diego de Soto which now no favoritism could spare. On Morro three guns were planted and look-outs maintained there and beyond as far as Matanzas, to scan the sea for approaching sails. Westward, Indian sentinels watched from vantage points on the Organo Mountains and from the south coast,—at Cabañas, Marien, Rio de Puercos, Capes San Antonio and Corrientes,—and Spaniards waited with them with horses ready to hurry any tidings to the town. Fire and smoke signals were all arranged. Havana did not know whether Drake had left Santo Domingo, or whether, as was greatly feared, he was making himself permanent master of that place.

Meanwhile, the volunteers sent forward by the other settlements were assembling in Havana. Some served without rations,—none, it seems, expected pay,—but for others food had to be provided and no other funds being available Rojas took it upon himself to spend of the money accumulated from the Chorrera ditch tax and, also without authority, he determined to continue that tax although the time for which it was authorized had expired and collections had been discontinued. His actions were eventually approved by the crown.

Early in April reinforcements, provisions and munitions, sent by the viceroy of Mexico reached Havana,—300 men in four ships, paid for eight months and accompanied by supplies for six. They came in command of

Martin Perez de Olaçabal who delivered them to Quiñones (Luxan being absent in Bayamo) and returned at once to Mexico. There were now about 900 well-trained arquebusiers in Havana.

On February 20th a despatch boat out of Seville carrying duplicate warnings as to Drake brought to Cuba an order to Luxan to resume the governorship in Havana, and extended his term. Juan Bautista de Rojas who had the governor's power of attorney immediately took possession of the office as his representative, as had been arranged at the time of the governor's unwilling departure in October, 1585. Luxan, coming up from Bayamo by forced marches, arrived in Havana about April 20th, accompanied by some ninety good arquebusiers. This raised the fighting force of the town to perhaps a thousand men. Luxan continued Rojas in authority as his lieutenant, a detail of which Quiñones disapproved. Nevertheless, appearance of harmony between the governor and the *alcaide* was maintained; even Quiñones affected to be glad of the governor's opportune return (although he said that by the time he got there all steps necessary to Havana's defence had been taken), and Luxan, informing the crown that concord prevailed, said he trusted in God that "the corsair" would gain nothing by visiting Havana. They hoped to give him a different reception from that he had enjoyed at Santo Domingo,—they expected "to take the covetousness out of him."

Havana had now heard nothing of Drake for eighty days. Inquiries were sent forth to neighboring settlements to learn his whereabouts, but a day or so later (on May 2) a frigate originally cleared from Seville came into port: it had approached near enough to

Cartagena to learn that having despoiled St. Domingo "the corsair" had moved on and taken that other colony in its turn. He held the place two months. It was rumored that he had sacked Puerto Caballo. Havana now waited, arms in hand, night and day expecting Drake every hour.

On May 27th a messenger arrived from Cape San Antonio saying that on the 22nd Drake's fleet had appeared off that west end of Cuba,—thirty sail in all (sixteen large ships, 400 to 600 tons burden, and fourteen small ones). They had taken on wood and water and seemed, at first, to be waiting there to attack the treasure fleet. On the 29th another messenger came in from San Anton with news that on the 25th his fleet had passed on, certainly, it was thought, for Havana.

On the 29th the first of the English vessels appeared,—six fast launches chasing a vessel from Campeche which carried a cargo of dyewood. She made port and a shot from Punta and another from Morro drove her pursuers back. At three o'clock in the afternoon Morro signalled fourteen sail in sight. The alarm had been sounded and now indeed all was activity in the trenches, and behind every one of the thirty guns, pointed muzzles toward the sea. Seven hundred men, Alonso Suarez de Toledo wrote, took their places along the coast; one hundred were in the *plaza*, and fifty in the fort. "It was a pleasure," he said, "to see these people in such good shape and in such high spirits." "Even the sick and useless," said Luxan, "kept their places in the trenches day and night." The weather was most propitious for a landing. The dawn of the 30th disclosed the full thirty of the enemy's ships, all making their most formidable appearance as having

passed Havana they lay at anchor off the Guacuranao River. Coasting craft, approaching without knowledge of the danger, were chased, and one, carrying nothing more valuable than a cargo of salt, was overhauled, though its crew escaped.

Havana's defenders lay in their trenches. Once Morro signalled that a landing was being made at Chorrera and all were of the unanimous opinion that once, at night, they saw Drake's landing party approach,—they even counted the barges and disputed the number of them. Meanwhile, the attacks of rain and mosquitoes which they endured were less of an illusion. Drake made no attempt to land at all.

On June 4 the English seemed to disappear. Great was the disappointment the Spaniards affected: had the enemy but landed they would have collected pay for all unsettled scores,—for "all," Alonso Suarez wrote, "that they have done and their evil heretical lives." Instead, Drake sailed away, "rich, and therefore he will come again. May God," continued Alonso Suarez, "indicate the remedy and your majesty move the execution of it less slowly and tardily than the despatch of the armada of galleons now expected." The armada had indeed left Spain and was "expected now that the enemy has gone. Would to God," Alonso Suarez exclaimed, that Drake might meet the Catholic King's good battleships in formidable line. Quiñones regretted that the royal armada should miss so fine a chance at an enemy short-handed as Drake was through sickness. Havana understood correctly that the Englishman was in no condition for any such encounter. Ten galleons, Alonso Suarez said, could have taken him. He kept his people's spirits up with fine words, for they

were in terror of meeting Spanish armed ships. It is difficult to imagine what would have been Havana's frame of mind had her people known that the armada they longed to see best the enemy had its orders to avoid him if possible, and to confine its endeavors to bringing the plate fleets safely home. Philip fully appreciated that Drake's great raid was a blow at his finances.

Eight Spaniards whom Drake had taken at Cartagena and sent ashore to get wood and water when he halted off the west end of Cuba, had escaped then and travelling to Havana with messengers who announced the enemy's fleet they had brought news of conditions aboard the English ships. There was plague; many persons died and were thrown overboard daily. Drake was, moreover, weighted down with captives,—Indians taken at Cartagena (mostly women who did menial service aboard his vessels), negroes, Turks and Moors. After a meeting with his captains as the fleet lay off San Anton, Drake had assured these "on his head," that they might feel safe as to their lives. It is possible that at this conference the Englishman decided not to attack Havana, for the season was far advanced, doubtless Havana had been warned and was therefore prepared to resist: at all events, the escaped Spaniards said that after this council Drake immediately stored away some of his plentiful artillery, and it seems certain that as he lay to off Bucuranao his chief interest was to get fresh water.

As soon as it seemed that Drake had indeed gone, messengers were sent out from Havana to make sure. Riders along the coast as far as Matanzas brought back word that no sails had been seen there. A frigate

coasting that far east saw no signs of the enemy. On its return Captain Vicente Gonzalez and Captain Pedro Bernal (who had helped bring the reinforcements from Mexico) were sent out, Bernal towards Tortugas and Gonzalez toward Cabezas de Martires, to look further. In time both returned, having discovered nothing of Drake. It was thus made clear that he had indeed departed. Then, as Luxan put it, these coasts rested from their unpleasant expectancy, yet there lingered a doubt as to whether or not the enemy might not have remained in Florida,—at any point, that is, along the Atlantic seaboard. Because he carried off negroes and implements of all sorts the Spaniards were entirely convinced that Drake planned to make a permanent settlement in the Indies: why else should he take away human chattels which he could not hold as such "in his own country"? By June 30th Havana knew that he had desolated St. Augustine. It was considered that Pedro Menendez had done well to save his people's lives. Within four hours after receipt of this news Havana had sent a vessel to their relief with food and munitions. It was supposed that Santa Elena had shared St. Augustine's fate; not until later did Havana learn that the place had escaped ruin at his hands because its settlers were too wise to fire cannon in answer to Drake's, booming along the coast as he tried in vain to locate it.

I have seen no mention that Cuba was informed how, continuing northward, Drake found Raleigh's colony in Virginia and conveyed its disheartened survivors home, whereas, I am led to believe, it had indeed been his hope to reinforce that settlement with the slaves and implements which were among spoils of his raid,

and so firmly establish an English base at Roanoke. "And thus it was," as Corbett concludes (*Drake and the Tudor Navy*), "that as England's first conquests in America were abandoned, her first colony was abandoned too; . . . in the very hour in which at last her naval power stood revealed to the world."

## CHAPTER XXII

### THE ANNOYANCE OF THE FRENCH (1586)

Meanwhile, French corsairs were informed by Luxan's despatches which they had captured that Santiago was without adequate protection, both men and munitions being very scarce; and judging the rest of the island to be too much concerned with Drake to succor the eastern port, they almost obliterated from the map that "first city of the island, . . . foundation of all discoveries made in these Indies." Only the "incorrigible" Gomez de Rojas's resilient courage prevented abandonment of its site.

In the summer of 1578 Santiago had sent Luis de Castro Bazan, Cuban-born son of Hernando de Castro, former factor, to court as its representative to ask favors of the crown. Santiago wanted a fort. The governor recommended it. He had sent arms to the thirty *vecinos* resident there; the full fighting force of the town was about 120 men. No fort materialized, however, beyond earthworks to protect the landing. Seville was ordered to send certain munitions and may have done so. A lookout seems to have been maintained on Morro headland, out of funds raised by a tax on the citizens.

And the French continued to do business on land, while energetically discouraging competition by sea. In the east, as governor's lieutenant in Luxan's absence Gomez de Rojas was doing his best to enforce the law.

By a ruse and in a picturesque encounter he ambushed and killed another seven Frenchmen (presumably at Manzanilla) at the same time capturing ten more, among them their leader Ricarte alias "Capitan Mota." He bore the heads of the seven into Bayamo on pikes and confined his prisoners there. Their trial before civil authorities was progressing, despite ecclesiastical demands that they be delivered over to the church as a case for the inquisition, when, on the afternoon of May 1, 1586, Gomez de Rojas received word that a French ship had appeared off Santiago. At ten that night he issued an order urging that justice be done quickly because he was compelled to return to Santiago for its defence and because the prisoners were pirates who knew the Cuban coast thoroughly. As a measure of public safety he advised the *alcaldes* to see to the case promptly: "and justice was done so that (the French) died." At midnight they were summoned from their jail one by one, on excuse that testimony was to be taken, but "daybreak found eight swinging on the gallows." The other two (one wounded) were to be similarly dealt with subsequently. The trial, it is interesting to notice, was properly continued later on. Having, however, so anticipated its satisfactory conclusion, Gomez de Rojas returned post haste to Santiago. He arrived late.

That very day two French ships,—one large and one small,—had attacked Santiago; the town *procurador* later informed the king that it was because food supplies had been refused to them. Santiago had defended itself; the fighting lasted from noon to night. One enemy ship grounded and was riddled with shot from the Spanish trenches, but the other pulled her off and

both retreated, the smaller towing the larger. They left an anchor behind, however, which was a well-understood threat that they would return. The Spaniards lost one man, who was blown to pieces by the explosion of one of their own guns, and some one of his flock shot Francisco Guerrero, *clerigo*, in the back as he stood animating the defence. All in all, this day of Saints Philip and James was a glorious day for the Spanish and one of ill-omen for the French,—what with eight of their nationality floating in the wind from Bayamo's gallows, and two of their ships limping off to La Yaguana (the corsair rendezvous of La Española), dropping overboard dead men killed by the effective fire of Santiago's scant defenders.

The bishop now was Salcedo who had with difficulty been persuaded to come in person to his diocese where in his absence his provisor Ribero armed “with a cross draped in black” was interfering with the administration of civil justice in Bayamo, and stoning the governor’s lieutenant’s house. He excommunicated Gomez de Rojas for dealing too rapidly with the eight Frenchmen whom he had hung before the church had her way with their goods. Rojas, believing the danger passed at Santiago, returned to Bayamo to set himself right with the bishop, but he kept his horse saddled lest he receive word to hurry back.

The very day Gomez reached Bayamo the French returned to Santiago, six or seven ships in all, and men to the number of eight hundred, the Spaniards said. On receipt of this news Gomez set out for the port at full speed, waiting for nobody to accompany him. The next day fourteen arquebusiers furnished by Bayamo came after. Bayamo too had given Santiago eighteen

pounds of powder. *Lic.* Minas followed with twenty-six more,—forty men in all, to reinforce the threatened settlement.

Meanwhile, five of the enemy ships came in close to Santiago town; one stood off at a distance. They fired many shots to which the Spaniards replied as best they could. They thought it curious that the French made no attempt to land. The reason was presently explained: news arrived that 150 men who had come ashore at Xuragua were approaching the town overland, guided by a man they had captured there where he was helping to build a ship. Another who had been working with him escaped and brought the warning but by the time he arrived in Santiago the French also were very near. Gomez Patiño went out to meet them with thirty men or so (Indians and Spaniards); they had a little powder. He mistook the route by which the enemy were coming but remedied his error in time to encounter them. His men, however, were scattered: he had but nineteen with him. They fought at long range until their powder was gone and then closed in hand to hand, retreating as they fought. The French lost their leader among a score or more killed. Patiño lost five men. The Spaniards made a last stand in the church, but finally surrendered "because they were worn out and some had gone to look after their women." Captain Lisano Luyando in command of some thirty men who had remained in the earthworks by the landing, kept up his end of the fight until powder gave out and the French had the town. His party retired only when it was made very evident to them that it was useless to resist further. The French had continued to fire from their ships in the bay. Some fifty houses in

the settlement were destroyed. Presently they landed men and began to demolish the more durable buildings which up to that time had escaped serious damage. They profaned the church, insulting altars and images, and wrecked the monastery and masonry residences. It seems the French did not loot the place systematically. It was said they did not get ten ducats' worth of booty, but they did carry off guns which belonged to Gomez de Rojas and spiked one which was the town's. Some shipping escaped them and they left hastily, evidently fearing the arrival of reinforcements.

Though doubtless he rode like the wind, rather than miss an occasion so much to his liking, Gomez de Rojas arrived in Santiago too late again. The French had gone. He ordered Bayamo's contingents home and faced the situation in Santiago as the visitors had left it in their wake.

It was serious. The people were entirely discouraged and some of the best of them desired to abandon the city forever; others suggested moving inland two leagues. On May 25th, on the estate of Juan Lopez, a league from Santiago, the town council and leading citizens met in session, Gomez de Rojas presiding, to determine what course of action should be pursued. Captain Luis Camacho, of the artillery, recited briefly the events which had just transpired of which all were only too well informed. He said that what artillery the enemy had left them had been withdrawn to a place of safety. There was no powder and there was no shot. Though palm board houses of the town had been destroyed, and the cathedral and monastery and church of San Francisco burned, there remained standing thirteen masonry houses and some few others, and the

church and hospital of Ntra. Sra. de la Concepcion, and the hermitage of Stas. Clara and Catalina. This was enough shelter, he said; he believed that the people should reassemble in the town, the churches should resume their services, the clergy should accommodate themselves in the hospital and hermitages, sentinels should again be set on Morro headland and elsewhere and along the road from Juragua; and aid should be asked of the crown for the repair of the cathedral. His remarks opened discussion. Opinion was divided. The *alcaldes* in very perfunctory terms stated that they were opposed to abandoning the city; certain *regidores* placed themselves on record as opposed to abandoning it until the king could be advised of their dire need. Another however declared that if they crowded back into such quarters as were available, it might be the death of them all,—it was the hottest season and Santiago was notoriously unhealthy. Captain Patiño said that since Santiago was in no shape to defend itself he advised the married men to betake themselves and their families to Havana, the bachelors to go where they saw fit. Alonso de Miranda then arose and declared with vehemence that he had been a resident of Santiago since the island was conquered and there he would remain until the king ordered otherwise, no matter what damage corsairs might do. Thirteen houses to say nothing of the hospital and church buildings remained. He demanded that the council close the road whereby the French had entered, set out sentinels as before, and otherwise resume life on the usual basis. Captain Luis Camacho agreed with Captain Patiño: two frigates were leaving with the transient population,—Santiago was without defence, and should be abandoned by its

*vecinos* as well. Captain Luyando said that it was a pity that so old a town, one that had served the king well as a base in the conquests of Mexico and Peru, and enjoyed the title of city, should be deserted now. He opposed the idea. Decision was at this time reserved until the opinion of one Juan Zapata could be had, but it was known that he favored withdrawing to Havana pending the king's action.

Gomez de Rojas had listened and he was of a valiant temper. He ordered mass sung next day. He bade the mayordomo sweep and clean the hospital, since the service was to be celebrated there, the cathedral being unworthy because it had been desecrated. He ordered the hermitages cleaned "and made decent" to receive the clergy and the Franciscan monks and he commanded them to return on penalty of forfeiture of any pay due them. He bade every man in town, resident and transient, to appear before the church door with his arms, that it might be learned how many of them there were. He ordered the *alcaldes* and *regidores* to hold a meeting of the town council on May 27th. Word was sent out, to many by name, that on penalty of fine and banishment all must present themselves in the devastated town. Gomez also ordered the meat market to open and artisans to return to work. He ordered the owners of the thirteen masonry houses to put them into shape to shelter neighbors who had resided in the more perishable structures, and he billeted the people as comfortably as he could. He ordered the Indians to burn the score of dead Frenchmen whom Patiño's party had laid out along the Juragua road, lest the bad smell which arose from the neglected corpses breed a sickness. His energetic measures saved Santiago. It was rebuilt.

Women and children remained for some time, however, at El Caney. The church there had not been damaged.

Being petitioned for a thousand ducats each for the cathedral and the monastery's church, and for slaves, and for leave to clear a ship from Seville to Santiago direct each year regardless of fleets, the king granted money for the restoration of the sacred edifices.

On July 5th Pedro Bernal left Havana with news of what had occurred in Cuba,—in east and west. He had an exciting crossing but arrived in Spain.

## THE END OF AN ERA

Drake's passage along her coast in 1586 ended the first large era of Cuba's history. Theretofore Philip's reliance had been upon his naval strength; but the Englishman demonstrated that it was insufficient to protect the Spanish Indies: therefore their colonies must be fortified to protect themselves. The council for the Indies had achieved this conception of the situation and of the necessity for a change in policy which it constituted, even before news reached the court in September, 1586, of "the corsair's" appearance off Havana and of the havoc wrought at Santiago by the French. When letters bearing these tidings were received from Cuba they were immediately laid before the king. "Your majesty's great prudence," the council for the Indies added, "best understands how important it is to provide in good season especially in view of the possibility that the enemy may return with a purpose, as he has said that he will."

The king had already acted. Confessing his weakness even before he knew how thoroughly Drake was demonstrating it to all the world, he ordered Joan de Texeda to go to the Indies in Alvaro Flores' armada which was despatched in Drake's wake to bring the plate fleets home. Texeda had instructions not to return from the Indies until he had seen "all the forts and observed what needs to be done in each one, according to the intention with which he was sent." That intention was

a comprehensive and intelligent fortification of all the Spanish possessions in and about the Caribbean Sea. Texeda was accompanied by the engineer Bautista de Antoneli. Great forts standing yet at San Juan in Porto Rico, at Cartagena, and at Havana, are the expression of their opinion as to what needed to be done.

Morro and Punta which Antoneli planned and Texeda largely built, cast a long shadow of safety over Cuba and in that grateful shade agricultural industry first struck deep root, copper mining revived and manufactures and ship-building began. Antoneli readily brought water into the city via the Chorrera ditch from the Almendares River; along its course the first sugar factories in Cuba made their prompt appearance. Texeda sampled the island's copper and on the site of the present *Maestranza* building it was successfully cast into cannon, and kettles. Timbers were fetched and from them famous frigates were built in Havana harbor: admirably fashioned under Texeda's keen eye as he sat on the ways and watched officials and workmen to keep them from stealing time and nails.

In brief, Spain took a firm hold at last upon her priceless possession of Cuba: "bulwark of the Indies, key to the new world." The island ceased to be a wayport of empire,—a mere base of operations for exploitation of Mexico, the southern continents and Florida. It came to be prized not alone for its strategical importance but also somewhat for its own inherent value in sugar, in copper and in woods.

Its great enemy was therefore the island's great benefactor: for no friend the colony had succeeded before him in accomplishing on its behalf as much as did Sir Francis Drake. Forts, artillery, garrisons, galleys

to patrol the coast,—everything that his loyal subjects had in vain petitioned the Catholic King to provide, all were forthcoming when instead of humble entreaties, Philip heard among his islands, along his own coasts, the beat of Drake's drum and the roll of the guns of the Tudor navy. They ushered in other times.



## GLOSSARY

(An attempt is here made to translate, in the sense in which they are used in this book, certain words for which no satisfactory brief equivalent occurred to the author while writing.—W.)

### A

**Acana**, a hard wood of Cuba.

**Adelantado**, a title which may be roughly described as that of civil and military governor of a province.

**Alcaide**, a military title: approximately, warden.

**Alcalde**, usually translated mayor. The word means judge, and designates the chief municipal authority whose principal duties were those of a judge of first instance.

**Alcalde ordinario**, i. e., ordinary *alcalde*: the official above-described as distinguished from other judges with lesser, prescribed jurisdictions, such, for instance, as *alcaldes de minas* (at mines).

**Alferez**, a military title: standard-bearer.

**Alguacil**, sheriff.

**Audiencia**, a higher court (at Santo Domingo). }

### B

**Bachiller**, bachelor: a minor title in scholarship.

**Blanca**, a white *maravedi*, i. e., a coin of lowest value.

**Bohio**, or *buhio*; the aboriginal word for the hut in which the aboriginal Cuban lived; still used in the island to designate a palm-thatched shack.

**Boniato**, a yam.

**Cabildo**, council: i. e., the *regimiento* (which see) and the *justicia* (which see) assembled in meeting.

## C

**Caballeria**, a measure of land: nowadays in Cuba approximately  $33\frac{1}{3}$  acres.

**Cacique**, an aboriginal chieftain.

**Cacona**, articles, or money, with which natives and slaves were rewarded for services.

**Caney**, a circular *bohio* (which see).

**Capitan**, captain.

**Capitan á guerra**, a representative of the governor to whom his military powers were delegated.

**Casa, de la contratacion**. Literally, house of trade: those offices in Seville through which especially the commerce of Indies was administered.

**Casa de fundicion**, smelter building; see *fundicion*.

**Castellano**, a coin.

**Cayo**, key; islet.

**Cazabe** or **cazabi**, a sort of bread still made in Cuba from roots of *yuca*. It is baked in the shape of a big rough wafer of rather pebbly appearance.

**Cedula**, a written communication; a letter.

**Cedula real**, an official communication from the crown.

**Cedulario**, books of records of *cedulas*.

**Ceiba**, a tree which bears a sort of cotton in pods which is still an article of commerce in Spain and Spanish-America known as *miraguano* or *miraguano de indias*.

**Cimarron**, wild; i. e., a native or slave in revolt.

**Clerigo**, a priest. "The good *clerigo*" was Fray Bartolome de las Casas.

**Componer**, to fix. *Componer extrangeros* was to naturalize them.

**Conquistador**, conqueror.

**Cosario**, corsair, i. e., one who cruises. Not an uncomplimentary designation; Pedro Menendez, for instance, refers to himself as a corsair and therefore acquainted with Indian sea routes.

**Criollo**, American-born.

**Cubeño**, aborigine of Cuba.

**Cura**, curate.

**E**

**Encomendado**, a native assigned to service under the *repartimiento* (which see).

**Encomendero**, the master of an *encomienda* (which see).

**Encomienda**, a parcel of natives as assigned to service under the *repartimiento* (which see).

**Escribania**, clerkship. There were various *escribanias*,—offices of considerable account.

**Escribano**, clerk: notary. An official of importance.

**Estancia**, a farm. The name implies that food-crops were raised thereon.

**F**

**Fanega**, a dry measure.

**Fundicion**, the gold-smelting plant and the periods each season of its operation.

**G**

**Guajiro**, the present-day countryman of Cuba.

**Guanines**, trinkets belonging to the aborigines; especially those made of hand-wrought gold.

**Guayacan**, a hard wood of Cuba.

**H**

**Hutia**, a wood-rat.

**I**

**Indio**, Indian: an aborigine of America.

**Indio cayo**, an Indian from an islet (see *cayo*).

**Indio de paz**, a peaceful Indian, i. e., one obedient to Spaniards.  
(See *cimarron*.)

**Indio manso**, a tame Indian.

**J**

**Juez**, judge.

**Juez de comision**, a judge commissioned by the *audiencia* (which see) to investigate specific charges. He was limited by his commission; he could merely gather information and arrest delinquents, carrying both off to the *audiencia* for its further action.

**Juez de residencia**, a judge commissioned to conduct a *residencia* (which see).

**Juez pezquisidor**, a judge conducting a *pezquiza* (which see).

**Juez visitador**, a judge commissioned by competent authorities to make a specified inspection.

**Justicia (la)**, "the justice," i. e., the *alcalde*s of a municipality: see *alcalde*.

**Justicia mayor**, a civil judicial official: he had approximately the civil powers of a governor.

## L

**Legajo**, a package of documents.

**Letrado**, literally "lettered," i. e., versed in law.

**Licenciado**, licenciate: the title of a graduated, i. e., licensed lawyer.

## M

**Maestre de campo**, a military title, approximately, colonel.

**Malanga**, an edible root.

**Maravedi**, a coin usually rated as  $\frac{1}{34}$  of a *real* (which see).

**Mestizo**, a person of mixed blood, especially Indian and Caucasian.

## N

**Naboria or naburia**, a Cubeño assigned to personal or household service away from his native village (see *repartimiento*).

**Naboria perpetua**, a servant assigned for life.

## O

**Oidor**, judge of an *audiencia* (which see).

## P

**Palenque**, an outlaws' stockade.

**Penas de camara**, petty fines levied by the lowest court.

**Peso**, a measure of value, originally a weight (the word means weight), but eventually a coin which comprised a variable number of *reales*: there were *pesos* of twelve *reales*, and of

ten *reales* and, again, there were *pesos de á ocho reales*, i. e., "pieces of eight." The word *peso* is still used in Cuba to designate the Spanish five *peseta* coin, or "dollar," or *duro*, which is, it is interesting to notice, still a "piece of eight," *reales fuertes*.

**Pesquiza secreta**, a secret inquisition into an official's administration; a secret assembling of evidence against him to be laid before a higher court to determine whether or not further action was necessary.

**Plaza**, square: the official center of a town. Not always an open park.

**Plaza de armas**, open ground usually near a fort, for military exercises.

**Procurador**, attorney, advocate; a delegate representing his constituents.

## Q

**Quarto**, a copper coin.

**Quintal**, hundredweight.

## R

**Rancho**, the camp of outlaws.

**Ranchear**, to hunt down outlaws.

**Real**, a measure of value: a coin. See *maravedi* and *peso*.

**Regidor**, member of a municipal council.

**Regidor perpetuo**, life-hold member of such council.

**Regimiento**, the members of a municipal council considered as constituting it.

**Repartidor**, an official empowered by the crown to assign natives to service under the *repartimiento* (which see).

**Repartimiento**, the system of bondage of native to Spaniard described at the beginning of Chapter III.

**Residencia**, an inquisition into an incumbent's conduct in office made usually by his successor at the close of his term. This investigation was a routine affair and no reflection upon an official whereas a *visita*, a *pesquisa* or the appearance of a *juez de comision* were distinct intimations that something wrong was suspected. The *residencia* was openly conducted

and a *juez de residencia* was empowered to sentence; appeal was to the council for the Indies.

**Residenciar**, to subject an official to a *residencia* (which see).

**Retablo**, the decorated backboard and sides of an altar.

## T

**Teniente**, lieutenant.

**Teniente de gobernador**, governor's lieutenant.

**Teniente gobernador**, lieutenant-governor.

## V

**Vecindad**, a grant of land to own which established a man's condition as a *vecino*: therefore it entailed a political condition.

**Vecino**, a land-holding resident, and therefore a citizen.

**Veedor**, inspector.

**Visita**, an inspection ordered by competent authority.

## Y

**Yuca**, a plant from roots of which the aborigines distilled poison and also made bread (there are two varieties of *yuca*); see *cazabe*.

**Yaguasa**, a duck native to Cuba.

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